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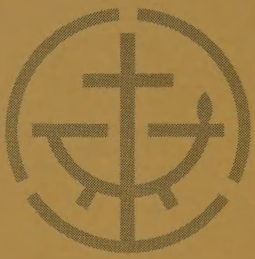
THE MASTER LIGHT

W. ELSWORTH LAWSON



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THE MASTER LIGHT

AN ATTEMPT TO READ THE TRUTH OF LIFE

THE MASTER LIGHT

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AN ATTEMPT TO READ THE TRUTH OF LIFE

BY
William
W. ELSWORTH LAWSON, 1868-

"Our little systems have their day,
They have their day, and cease to be;
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they."

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BY W. ELSWORTH LAWSON

BY WAY OF DEDICATION

Light dawns and dies;
The hours between see little done.
Power comes, and flies
Before its treasures have been won.
Unveiled an instant, truth with art appears;
Then vain my search through their congenial spheres.
Impatient years
Turn scornfully on that I've made;
New hopes, new fears
Beset me as my words are weighed.

Light dawns and dies!
But woman's love escapes the night.
Power comes and flies!
But woman's faith out-stays the flight.
Like eagles' wings thy love and faith have straight
Up-borne my spirit in its dark estate.
Love consecrate,
This reading of the truth of life
I dedicate
To thee, my critic, comrade, wife.

PREFACE

THE following pages are not addressed to scientists, philosophers or theologians who would find little that is new in them, but to the average man in the street who, more or less wistfully, longs for some central and controlling ideal to which the confusing theories and speculations of our day may be brought for judgment. And they appeal to him with the sincere desire of encouraging him to think for himself about their claim concerning the significance of the mind of Christ as the measure of all things.

Only a mere fraction of those ancient problems which still vex the modern mind are treated here, and even these but briefly and suggestively, and more as contributions to method than to knowledge. My aim has been not to solve problems but rather to help the reader a few steps along the path at the end of which, I am convinced, light and truth abide.

The incompleteness of this little volume,

both in the problems chosen and in the treatment of them, must be apparent to everyone. A friendly theological critic, to whom these pages were submitted, has pointed out that there is no discussion of miracles here, and no real "facing of the problem of evil." To both these charges I plead guilty. I desired to write a small book that could be read at one serious sitting; and it appears to me that the man in the street cares little about the first of these problems, while concerning the second he cares so much that any positive and constructive discussion of it would have expanded the book far beyond the modest limits I had set.

But there is one omission which, face to face with the seeming breakdown of European civilization, not alone the theologian but also the very man for whom I have written may consider serious. There is no chapter on "The Master Light and Social and Political Thought." It may be worth while to state that such a chapter was planned and practically written when the shock of war shattered its otiose optimism into a thousand fragments. It was written around the principle of "Fraternalism"—a

word which I had fondly hoped to recover from those societies within Society which have appropriated it, and apply it to Society as a whole. I still venture to think that the principle is valid and workable, that the solution of social, national and international relations can be reached only by a thorough, consistent and world-wide application of it. But the problems involved in such an application are too numerous and intricate to be discussed within the compass of a short chapter. Besides, though I see the questions, I cannot always discern the answers. More time, more experience, and more thought are necessary before that chapter can ever be re-written. But it is absolutely certain to me that the mind of Christ—not the minds of the social agitator, the trader, the armament-maker, the diplomat and the militarist—must control human relations in the new world, at the gates of which we now stand in awe and fear.

It may seem to many people a colossal conceit, if not an actual blasphemy, to assert in these awful and heart-sickening days that "we have the mind of Christ." With hearts all one monstrous hate, and blinded with

passion, the militarists of Europe have piloted their nations into a maelstrom of blood. One nation has already gone mad, and others seem trembling on the verge of madness. What burden of horror our hearts may yet have to bear, who can foretell? And yet all that violence and deceit, all those cruelties and ruthless murders do not destroy the truth of this book. They are but the hideous handiwork of the despairing savagery of the decivilized breaking final bounds only to perish forever in the ultimate triumph of the aroused and cleansed conscience of humanity. Grieve over them as we must, they ought not to drive us to pessimism and atheism. We *have* the mind of Christ. And the great thing in all these sad days is not the barbarity and monstrous wickedness to which they are witness, but the shining fact that the rest of the world —so much vaster and more complex than any world which the first Christians knew —does not view these atrocities of hatred with indifference or complacency, but with a profound, sincere and open condemnation. This is the big thing in our day. It is a proof, if proof be needed, that the mind of

Christ is still constraining the minds of men; and it is fraught with hope for the future. If human interests seem to have been well-nigh strangulated by that octopus of politics miscalled national interests, the end is not yet. A new theory of national honor and a new international creed will be wrought out of the ruins of both which now strew the sodden fields of Europe; and not national interests any more, but the world's interests will dictate the policies of the day after tomorrow.

Meanwhile our duty as Christians is surely clear. We need not join in the strident chorus of denunciation of the church for her failure to prevent the war. With a great and sad sincerity, the church herself feels the shame of that failure now. What we have to do is to insist that in the future the mind of Christ must have its rightful and supreme place not alone in our individual and social affairs, but also in the larger affairs of our nation and of the world. It is not for the Church to adopt any other mind, however popular and vociferous it may momentarily be. She has the mind of Christ; and if the accusation of Lord Bal-

four is not to be proved true: "That the Church was powerless when it came to any of the serious crises facing humanity," then she must awake to the consciousness of her incomparably precious possession and the splendid opportunity which it offers her. The tremendous task before the Church of today is that of being the outspoken and implacable enemy of militarism in all its forms. This is the Holy War in which we must enlist all the forces of the Church. And "there is no discharge in that war." Militarism must be destroyed root and branch, or it will eventually destroy the Church. Will the Church, as the declared exponent of the mind of Christ, be equal in courage as she is in power for the task? If not, if in her cowardice she again makes friends with militarism, then she will surely perish; for the mind of Christ and the "Hymn of Hate" are incompatible. My own faith is that she will rise to the greatness of her opportunity, that not the Church but militarism will finally pass away and be but a dream of horror to the awakened world. Nothing short of permanent international peace can ever satisfy us now.

And though it must be the work of statesmen to create the legal instruments of such a peace, it remains the business of the Church to demand it. If only we cared enough we could have it. Therefore let the Church awake and

"Stand forth for Peace and win a deathless name.
Peace is not peace that sings its battle songs,
And sets its cannon on a hundred hills;
That points its guns, North, East, and West and South
Towards friendly harbors, ready at a word
To call friends enemies and targets—no!
Peace is the great affirmative of God;
It knows no armies, arms, nor armaments:
For armies, arms, and armaments deal death,
And Peace holds conquests in the strength of life."

W. E. L.

Foxboro, Mass.
September, 1915.

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I

THE MASTER LIGHT AND THE CHRISTIAN CONSCIOUSNESS

"But we have the mind of Christ." *1 Cor. 2:16.*

"The Greeks, in other respects so advanced, knew neither God nor even man in their true universality. The gods of the Greeks were only particular powers of the mind; and the universal God, the God of all nations, was to the Athenians still a God concealed. They believed in the same way that an absolute gulf separated themselves from the barbarians. Man as man was not then recognized to be of infinite worth and to have infinite rights." W. WALLACE, *"The Logic of Hegel"* (trans.), p. 293.

"We have really to ask what the 'secret of Jesus' was. . . . It lay in a new Doctrine and a new Temper: a new doctrine concerning the nature of God and the nature of the religious relation of men to God and to each other; and such an unparalleled temper of complete identification with the doctrine as was even more new in the history of the world. . . . It must be the chief aim of any religious method that can justly lay claim to being Christian, to bring about, in all the minds upon which it acts, the possession of this secret of the Founder." G. H. HOWISON, *"The Limits of Evolution,"* p. 243 ff.

"Since much at first, in deed and word,
Lay simply and sufficiently exposed,
Had grown (or else my soul was grown to match,
Fed through such years, familiar with such light,
Guarded and guided still to see and speak)
Of new significance and fresh result;
What first were guessed as points, I now knew stars,
And named them in the Gospel I have writ."
R. BROWNING, *"A Death in the Desert."*

CHAPTER I

THE MASTER LIGHT AND THE CHRISTIAN CONSCIOUSNESS

THE consciousness of the place of Christ in the modern mind is not nearly so supreme and vital as we popularly imagine it to be. We talk a great deal about Christ, we sing of him, we read and think of him, but our spiritual and intellectual apprehension of his transcendent significance for our age is curiously small. Emotionally he may seem to reign, intellectually he has scarcely any conscious hold of us at all. In commerce, in domestic politics, in world-politics, in our philosophies of life and in the deeper problems of humanity the intelligent consideration of the mind of Christ has little place. The intellectual timidity which has overtaken so large a part of the Christian community of our time would seem to be the direct result of this failure in appreciation. Multitudes of men and women, professing

allegiance to Christ, yet fear to face the literary, historical, intellectual and moral problems which the last half a century has forced upon us. Are we, then, upon whom the ends of the world have come, utterly without a measure of right and truth, a principle of interpretation and judgment? It is the purpose of this little book to answer that question by a discussion of the significance of the mind of Christ for our modern problems. An exhaustive treatment of these problems is out of the question. They are too deep in some directions, too fluid in others for such treatment, at least by the present expositor. But if we cannot solve these problems, we may be put in the way of solving them. I shall rest content, therefore, if I can help you to see the great constructive principle upon which I believe that the Church of today, and still more the Church of tomorrow, must take an intelligent stand.

I

The history of thought seems to declare that man has always contemplated existence with wonder and awe. Wherever men have

spoken the problem of the meaning and the measure of life has been earnestly debated. From Thales to Eucken, from Job and Æschylus to Dante and Shakspere, and from them to the latest poet and dramatist men have directed the energies of their intellect toward the solution of this problem. The speculations concerning the ultimate meaning of the universe form one of the most interesting chapters of man's intellectual and spiritual travail. With a wealth of interpretation and luminous criticism, Dr. George A. Gordon, in the second chapter of "The Christ of Today," has pointed out that in the "vast and profound chapter of ancient thought, without whose mastery one cannot so much as find one's way in modern speculation," there are four divisions, four profound sentences uttered by four different thinkers within a period of time extending over five centuries. They form a progressive series of solutions on the problem of life. Let me state them as simply as I can because they lead directly to the subject of this chapter.

Until five hundred years before the birth of Jesus the philosophy of Greece moved

largely under the banner of the famous doctrine of the Eternal Flux. That is to say, putting it briefly, men thought that the world of experience was the result of continuous irresponsible mechanical change without either a personal guide or a particular purpose.

Then Protagoras arose and struck the first blow against this otiose theory. He tried to reach a point from which this kaleidoscopic life of ours could be judged. He said, "Man is the measure of all things." And with that saying a new period in the history of thought began. To the problem of Nature it added the problem of Personality. Before Protagoras men had been content with speculations about things. Now began the long speculation about mind, the search for a criterion of truth and of the end of life. He said that it was vain for man to study the universe as something outside of himself; man was a universe within a universe and must take himself as the standard of judgment. The only real thing within his reach was himself. Now this was a revolutionary idea, even though in the thought of its originator it seems

never to have risen from the individual to the race. Protagoras was in the familiar position of one who cannot see the forest for the trees. "Men hindered him from seeing man." Thus his standard of judgment was not the human understanding, but the understanding of the individual. "Things are to me," he said, "as they appear to me, and to you as they appear to you." From this point of view every man is a self-elected judge of all things, and intellectual chaos is come again. And whenever intellectual chaos prevails, moral chaos, in which every man does that which is right in his own eyes, is never far off; and there remains no such thing as a standard of truth, of beauty and of goodness which should be binding upon mankind. Yet in spite of the confusion which the Protagorean principle engendered, it was fraught with great results. It ushered in an age of criticism based upon a new consciousness of self, and it was the forerunner of logic.

Seventeen years before the death of Protagoras, Plato was born; and by and by his mighty mind concerned itself with the problem of the universe. Always in the

interest of ethical ideas, Plato worked over the theories of his predecessors and, through the mask of his beloved master Socrates, he exposed the error of Protagoras. From Socrates he had learned the famous maxim "Know thyself," and in that knowledge he protested against the intellectual and moral subjectivism of his day. What Plato really did in those great Socratic dialogues was to bring God into the problem. God and man were, according to him, akin to each other, the mind of man being an offshoot, a fragment of the Infinite mind. And so, he argued, the whole and not the part must be our standard of judgment. In "The Laws," the final fruit of his mature mind, he says: "God is the measure of all things, in a sense far higher than any man could be, as the common saying affirms." Elsewhere he declares that the supreme business of man is to climb the heights whereon God stands and to "measure truth, beauty and goodness by the thought, and love, and life of the Eternal." But how man was to climb that desirable stairway to God he nowhere makes plain. Yet his saying, "God is the measure of all things," remained as a chal-

lenge to the intellect and conscience of succeeding generations.

Twenty-seven years before the death of Plato, Aristotle was born. He became first the disciple and afterwards the rival of Plato. The teaching of Aristotle does not, at first sight, seem to go beyond that of Protagoras, for he declares that all speculation on the meaning and purpose of life necessarily centers in personality. Man is still the measure of all things. But when in his "Ethics" he is discussing the virtues, we find him asking (as, indeed, Socrates had asked before him) what kind of man must be the measure of all things. Thus we come upon the last answer of Greek philosophy: "The perfect man is the perfect judge of all things." Here, then, more than three hundred years before Christ we have the final verdict of philosophy face to face with the vital question of the meaning of life—the perfect man, the man of moral insight as, in the last resort, the standard of all truth and right. But to the inquiry, Where is this perfect man? Greece furnished no answer. He was a sublime ideal, the creation of the world's hunger, but the world

had to wait three more centuries for his appearing.

Then Paul, whose religious genius and insight was as exalted and intellectual as the genius of the Greek philosophers, began where they left off. In Athens he noted the intellectual and religious confusion which was undoubtedly one of the results of the destructive criticism and radical scepticism of the final stage of Hellenism. Now thought and conduct, the mental vision and the moral purpose, go hand in hand. When you leave the academy for the street the real outcome of its teaching may be observed. And perhaps nowhere else in Greece were the disastrous results of intellectual confusion more apparent than in the populous commercial city of Corinth. The "abysmal immorality" of Corinthian society had turned the city's name into an epithet. To be a "Corinthian" had come to mean that a man recognized no standard of either thought or conduct.

It was to Corinth that Paul came direct from his sad experience at Athens. Here he labored for eighteen months, then went on to Ephesus, leaving behind him a Chris-

tian church. Robbed of his leadership the congregation drifted into the confusion of its neighbors. And at Ephesus Paul began to receive the disquieting news that subversive moral theories, conflicting philosophies and personal animosities threatened the life of the infant church. With an intellectual courage which it is difficult for us rightly to estimate, he wrote a letter to those degenerate Greeks in which he sought to establish an ultimate criterion of judgment. He maintained that the Christian church was independent of any theories which the conflicting minds of the Corinthians might invent. It possessed within itself the measure of all things. "But we have the mind of Christ," he declared, and pointed them to the Supreme Person for whom the Greek philosophers had long waited.

Now it is not asserted here that Paul in any personal way connected his declaration with the philosophic thought of the past. We do not know what his acquaintance was with Greek thought. But it is maintained that, whether deliberately or by happy independence, this saying does connect itself with, and complete that great chapter of

human speculation. To the apostle, Christ was the measure of all things—his Presence, his Lordship, the illuminating power of his character, and the redeeming power of his cross covered every realm of thought and conduct. The mind of Christ was the master light through which all the relations of man in the world within and without him were to be read and tested. And this mind, he asserted, was the common possession of the disciples of Christ. He recognized, as all great teachers must, the different levels both of intellect and spiritual receptivity in men. But his concept of the mind of Christ was no esoteric thing; all might receive it, all might grow into awareness of possessing it. Here, then, in Paul's exaltation of the mind of Christ as the measure of all things, the search of man for the norm of truth and beauty and goodness culminated. And the supreme task of succeeding generations has been the one task of interpretation.

II

We have now to ask how Paul reached this great assurance of possession. It may be as well to admit at once that a full answer to this question must not be expected. We are too far from Paul's day, and the record of his experience is too meagre for confident utterance. Still, certain facts lie plainly before us in the New Testament. There is the account of his initial experience on the road to Damascus. Whatever we may think about that experience we cannot refuse to recognize its profound influence upon his thought. It was not simply that he was convinced that the risen Christ had appeared *to* him, but also, and pre-eminently, that God had revealed His Son *in* him. A mere vision of Jesus in the skies could not account for the sudden transformation in the mind of Paul. To whatever there was of objectivity in that vision was added a deep interior revelation. When, twenty years afterward, he wrote, "It is God who shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus

Christ," he must surely have been thinking of the light that shone upon and within him near the gates of Damascus. It is impossible, I think, to put too great an emphasis on this initial experience; though it is equally impossible accurately to describe its content. It will be sufficient if we discern in it a complete spiritual revolution, the intellectual and moral consequences of which only time could enfold. It is not intended here to minimize any preparation for this experience that Paul must have undergone, that "kicking against the goad," of which he was conscious; but only to recognize the supreme psychological and spiritual worth of the experience itself. The experience, not the preparation, is the great thing.

The second fact to note is that the apostle spent some time with the disciples at Damascus. Here the story of Jesus would be related to him afresh. With the public version of that story he must have been already acquainted, but with what a different accent it would now fall upon his ears! How the gracious words and deeds of the crucified Christ would be eagerly treasured up by this new and bewildered disciple!

These "certain days" in Damascus must have been filled with surprising information, serious questioning and rapid mental readjustments. New points of view, new interpretations of history, new insights into human and Divine relationships—all this, and how much more would follow as the mind of Paul came in contact with the mind of the historical Jesus. Yet we can scarcely imagine him telling the disciples in Damascus, "we have the mind of Christ."

Then followed those three important years of silence and meditation in Arabia—the period of orientation out of which the gospel of Paul came. How can we perform the task of interpreting those three years! It is impossible. Yet from his authentic letters we may discern something of the progress of Paul's experience. We can see the mind of Paul revising his own history and that of his race in the new light that had flashed within him on the road to Damascus. In that same light all the bare facts of the history of Jesus, his teaching, his deeds, his personality, as these had been related to him, would receive a new interpretation and an ever-deepening signifi-

cance. And as the days went on, and he remained devoutly obedient to his new spiritual experience, his consciousness of fellowship with the spirit of Christ must have deepened and developed, and with it a new consciousness of himself. Before the mind of Paul the great figure of the Son of Man stood out in its unique sublimity, and he began to see behind and within it the mind of Christ. Not merely the thoughts and teachings of Jesus but the very mind, the amazing spiritual and moral consciousness out of which those thoughts and teachings sprang, now filled his days. It was out of this double consciousness of himself and his Lord that Paul's new criticism of life came: a criticism having its roots far back, it may be, in the Greek doctrine of self-consciousness, but now, for the first time in history, dominated by the mind of Christ.

When Paul came out of Arabia to begin his ministry to the Gentiles he might have been able to say: "I have the mind of Christ." But during those twenty years of missionary service he found his experience repeated again and again in the experience

of others. The conception of a new society, a new humanity, being created by Christ, came to complete his own individual experience. He saw that the mind of Christ was a social gift, that the spirit of life in Christ Jesus was shed abroad throughout the new Christian community, each member sharing in it as he subjected himself to the rule, the authority and the redeeming power of the Eternal Living Lord. And thus at last he could write to the church in Corinth, "But we have the mind of Christ."

It has been said that Paul seems never to have recovered from his surprise at the discovery of what Jesus Christ meant for the intellect. And I think that is true. Many passages of sustained eloquence and rapt meditation in the epistles testify that Christ remained to him the world's supreme spiritual and intellectual possession. In the perfect man Christ Jesus he found the "historical expression of the Eternal Son in the bosom of the Father." That is to say that Jesus became to Paul not only the revelation of the incarnation of God in humanity, but also the abiding symbol of the incarnation of humanity in God. Here was One

who did not climb by any laborious Platonic stairway to the heights whereon God stood. *He was there!* And his very presence there was the attestation of the God who is, and the declaration of the man that should yet be. This truth of the abiding fellowship of man and God, of which the Person of Christ was the ideal symbol and assurance, was to Paul the central message he had to deliver. The Gospel to him was not only a message to the heart and conscience, but also a message to the intellect, a message which lighted up the mystery of existence, and presented to his mind a universe whose supreme value to God was seen in the Cross of Christ. Of course there is a Christ of feeling in Paul's theology, but he never subordinated to it the Christ of truth. To read his letters is to be brought into vivid contact with a mind always alert and constantly occupying itself with the deepest problems of life. And to the solution of these problems Paul brought to bear, with an exalted imagination and an indestructible faith, the mind of Christ.

III

Here, then, is the standard which we need to bring back into all our thinking if we would save the church of Christ in our day from intellectual and moral sterility. It is a modern commonplace to speak of the difference between our problems and those which exercised the mind of Paul. The small and simple world of his day has vanished in the various and infinitely complex world which science and literature, exploration and invention have thrown open to us. A comparison between the philosophy of history, as exhibited in the Epistle to the Romans, for example, and that which obtains in our day would be very fruitful in suggestions. It is not enough to say that Israel and Gentiles have given place to East and West; for East and West, except as mere territorial divisions, are rapidly ceasing to be. Science and art, philosophy and theology are no longer merely local, nor even national achievements; they are assuming world relationships. The creative imagination of Russia or Japan affects the creative

imagination of America and the far isles of the sea. The most striking feature of modern thought in politics, economics and sociology is that of a contemporaneous humanity. And this world of ours is immeasurably more complex than any which Paul's knowledge and imagination compassed. All this creates new problems for the intellect, new ideals for the conscience, new tasks for the will. We need not wonder if men are still a little bewildered amid all these new ideas, ideals and achievements which are the boast of our generation. There has swept into our ken a vast world of human souls, a society of persons, minds, moral personalities variously equipped and variously handicapped. Can we say, then, that the indispensable measure of all things is still the mind of Christ? If we can, then this new world of ours, these new discoveries and developments in science and art and thought and life become true sacraments of the soul of man; if we cannot say it, then they but serve to throw into relief the "splendid desolation" in which we live.

My own conviction is that the statement of St. Paul is still valid for the serious

thinker of today. From the historical Jesus we are two thousand years away, and yet we can say, with a marvellous fullness of meaning, "But we have the mind of Christ." If we are walking in the light, if we are serious, if we really know what we are about, we may discern the mind of Christ ceaselessly at work within the minds of men. The supreme place we assign to goodness, the moralization of our social and civic institutions, the deepening significance of the function of conscience in political life, the progressive triumph of international co-operation, the universal appreciation of the great moral personality, the increasing sense of the value of personalities not great—all these are the direct outcome of the impact of the mind of Christ upon the human mind. As a great thinker of our time puts it: "Christ is the creator of our human world. We are born into his world; we wake and sleep, work and rest, rejoice and weep, live and die in it." And this awareness of the mind of Christ as the norm of religious thought, the inspiration of religious feeling, the ideal and dynamic for religious character, and the intellectual fount from which

the ultimate philosophy of the world must arise, will become ever more and more distinct and commanding as the years pass.

IV

But now, it is possible that you may acknowledge the transcendental value of the mind of Christ in "the great spiritual pioneers of the race," whose conscience was supremely sensitive to the direct influence of the Divine; but, you ask, can *we* have the mind of Christ? If we cannot, then there is no Gospel to preach; for the reproduction in living men of the spiritual distinction of Jesus is surely of the essence of the Gospel. "Lo," said Jesus once to his disciples, "I am with you always, even to the end of the ages." And the supreme and permanent work of the Holy Spirit is just this work of awakening in men the realization of Christ's presence in the world, and of interpreting the mind of Christ through the mind of the lover of Christ. The mind of Christ in the minds of Christians is the eternal witness of his continuous presence in human society. It is scarcely necessary to remind you that the mind of Christ must always

transcend any particular manifestation of it that we can ever know. But that we—poor, sinful, fragmentary men and women though we are—may possess the mind of Christ, and carry something of his vision and love into the world about us, I do most honestly believe. To recover that vision and love, and to measure all things by them, is the modern task of the Christian community.

How then is it gained? First of all, by the way of history. However imperfectly Jesus is known, however imperfectly he is understood, there is no longer any doubt of the historical value of the figure of Jesus preserved in the New Testament. The vagaries of Christian theology have arisen whenever the Jesus of history has been ignored or misunderstood. It may be objected that criticism has thrown considerable doubt on the authenticity of some of the sayings and deeds of Jesus. But whatever criticism has done, or may do in the future with particular sayings of Jesus, there is an impression of his teaching and a manifestation of his personality which remain independent of all criticism. And this is sufficient to reveal to the serious stu-

dent what manner of being Jesus was, what principles underlay his teaching, what ideals actuated his life, what vision of God and man dwelt within him. This assurance of the adequacy of the portrait of Jesus in the Gospels is increased when we note the surprising fact that in the rest of the New Testament particular sayings of Jesus are rarely quoted, they have given place to an interpretation of the mind of Christ, to a consciousness of actually possessing that mind. It is not this or that saying, this or that deed, but the whole character and spirit of Christ that is the central thing in the early Church,—that, and the profound conviction of living under the direct inspiration of the Living Lord.

Then comes the way of appropriation. As we behold the mind of Christ progressively realized in the growing consciousness of the Church we come at last to see how it may be ours. We hear Jesus say: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me. I do always the things that are pleasing to him." We hear Paul declare: "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." This self-surrender and obedience is the path to

all inspiration and wisdom. In the great phrase of St. Paul, "Christ," as he is mediated to us through the pages of the New Testament, through the history of Christendom, and through the spiritual needs and crises of our own souls, "is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." Thus we learn to govern our thinking by the classic experience of the past and by communion with the mind of Christ present with us.

Learn to know Jesus for yourselves, study the record of his life, his words and deeds; study the effect of his spirit as it may be discerned working in the greatest minds and movements in subsequent history; then bring all your problems of thought and conduct into the light of the resultant vision of the mind of Christ. It will master your mind, illuminate your destiny, enkindle your emotion and nerve your will.

In the mind of Christ are gathered up and expressed all those "august anticipations, symbols, types" of God written in history and the human conscience, all those secret intimations of the spiritual greatness of

man, as actually sharing in the Divine Nature—anticipations and intimations which, however vague and shadowy they may ordinarily be,

> "Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
> Are yet the master light of all our seeing."

It is the light which, as John Woolman said, is "deep and inward, confined to no forms of religion nor excluded from any when the heart stands in perfect sincerity." Let this mind, then, be in you which was also in Christ Jesus; for it blends into one the passion for truth, the passion for humanity, and the passion for God.

II

THE MASTER LIGHT AND THE BIBLE

"Jesus therefore said to those Jews that had believed him, If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." *St. John 8: 31-33.*

"But we have the mind of Christ." *1 Cor. 2: 16.*

"Men have been trained in the belief that the holiest elements of our creed, nay the assurance of the existence and love of God Himself, are bound up with the literal acceptance of the whole Bible, of which the Old Testament forms by much the greater part; so that whenever their minds awoke to the irreconcilable discrepancies of the Old Testament text, or their consciences to the narrow and violent temper of its customs, and they could no longer believe in it, as the equal and consistent message of God to men, their whole faith in Him, suspended from their earliest years upon this impossible view of it, was in danger of failing them, and in innumerable cases did fail them for the rest of their lives." G. A Smith, *"Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament,"* p. 26.

"Criticism in the hands of Christian scholars does not banish or destroy the inspiration of the Old Testament; it *presupposes* it; it seeks only to determine the conditions under which it manifests itself; and it thus helps us to frame truer conceptions of the methods which it has pleased God to employ in revealing Himself to His ancient people of Israel, and in preparing the way for the fuller manifestation of Himself in Christ Jesus." S. R. Driver, *"Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament,"* p. xiii.

"To see with the eyes of Christ, to call that good which God calls good, to rule out that which the Christian truth rules out,—this is the highest work and privilege of God's children." W. N. Clarke, *"The Use of the Scriptures in Theology,"* p. 72.

CHAPTER II

THE MASTER LIGHT AND THE BIBLE

In our consideration of the principle that man at his best is the measure of all things, we found that if we are indebted to Greek philosophy for the idea, we are strictly indebted to the Christian religion for the ideal. We tried to trace certain of the steps by which Paul came to apprehend the mind of Christ as the possession of the Christian community, and as the norm of truth, the standard of judgment. We further declared our belief that it is the business and the high privilege of the Church of today to recover the triumphant assurance of Paul and face the problems of our day with the mind of Christ as the creative principle of our interpretation.

But now two things need to be said before proceeding to apply and further interpret our principle. It may be objected that, in

its last analysis, this means pure intuitionalism. But that is not true. It is simply a plea for the recognition of the worth of the Christian consciousness in the world. It is the assertion that Jesus knew what he was about when he said: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free:" and that he covered in meaning the whole realm of truth when he said further: "But the Paraclete, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things." What it is necessary to be sure about is that truth did come with Jesus Christ, that in this truth we all may share if with sincerity and humility we seek for it, and that with the vital consciousness of the mind of Christ informing our minds we possess a fruitful working principle by which we may test the conflicting minds and theories of our own times.

The second thing of which we ought to be sure is that this principle is not a new and untried thing. It is as old as the Christian religion itself. If it were first put into a phrase by Paul, it has been at the heart of every advance in thought and insight, of every reformation in religion and morals

for two thousand years. It is the very principle which you yourselves, consciously or unconsciously, employ in your common judgments of another's teaching or another's conduct. When you say this idea is unchristian, this conduct is unchristian, what test are you applying but that of the mind of Christ, or what you have come to believe is the mind of Christ? When you decide that a certain course of action which you propose to follow is Christian, how have you reached that decision? Have you not reached it by the application of a fine conscience created in you by contact with the same mind in history, in the Christian thought of your own day, and in your own soul? My only contention is that we have not carried the principle deep enough. We have not ventured to apply it with the width of spiritual vision, the fearlessness of spiritual action, and the perfect assurance of its efficiency which were the characteristic marks of primitive Christianity. The conviction, in the energy of which this little book is being written, is that when we accept this principle thoroughly it will go far, very far indeed, to cure the intellectual restless-

ness, moral perplexity and spiritual discouragement which are the prevailing notes of our day.

I

We are now ready to ask: What is the significance of the mind of Christ for our modern problems? The first of these is the Bible. It comes first in our discussion, not simply because of its own unique interest, but also because it is at the present moment a greater problem to thousands of conscientious men and women than any other. Yet, less than a century ago, the Bible to almost everybody in the Church at least presented no problem at all. It was, from Genesis to Revelation, the Word of God, an infallible book, supernaturally inspired, supernaturally preserved from interpolations, and supernaturally translated. The different men who wrote or compiled its different books were not human in any recognizable sense. They were instruments, passive recorders, even mere "pens" in the hands of the Holy Ghost. The science of history as we know it was as yet unborn, and no account was taken of the progress of thought and morals in the years that passed between

the oldest and the newest writings in the Bible. A text from the Book of Judges, or Esther, or the Song of Songs, or Ecclesiastes was just as authentic and valuable for the establishing of any doctrine, as one taken from the Gospels or the Epistles. The proof-text method, indeed, was supreme in theological thought, while the position and the quality of the text were of no special moment. Literary criticism—the kind that is at once imaginative and constructive, interpretative and historical—was scarcely out of its swaddling clothes. Little distinction was observed between the poetry of the Bible and its prose, between history and prophecy, between narrative and comment, between apocalypse and epistle. Indeed, the particular literary medium, as itself an important instrument of interpretation, had not yet been entertained by the general mind. One hundred years ago, every book in the Bible was accepted as practically the work of the writer whose name it bore in its title, or that appeared in the first few sentences. Every statement, whether of men or gods, of event or thought, was taken at its face value. All that a man had to do was to

take the Bible just as it stood, as the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth; and thus of equal value throughout. Whatever other ideas came to him in the course of his secular studies must be made to square with the statements, or the received interpretation of the statements, contained in the Bible. To the Protestant of a hundred years ago the Bible, the whole Bible, was the measure of all things. In other words, there was no problem of the Bible. It was itself the solver of all problems. Even less than fifty years ago, save in the minds of a few brave scholars whose voices the Church scarcely heard, there was no problem. And it is certain that there are multitudes in the Church of Christ today to whom the Bible presents no problem of any sort. It came to them as a sacred tradition and they have never questioned the validity of their inheritance.

But the last fifty or seventy-five years have been years of tremendous upheaval in every department of human thought and knowledge. Nothing is now as once it seemed. Knowledge has increased more and more; new sciences have been created,

and old sciences made new; empires long forgotten, and literatures long lost have been flashed before our wondering eyes; the whole world of man has been reconstructed, or is in the process of reconstruction; and, what is of more importance still, our whole way of approach to history and literature and nature has undergone a radical and vital change. What is called the "scientific method" has invaded every province of learning. It is this new world into which we have come, and this new method we have won that have created for us the problem of the Bible.

II

Now there are two classes of persons to whom the Bible has become a serious problem. There is first of all the vast multitude of our young men and women upon whom have come the ends of the age. It must not be forgotten that much of that which I have so inadequately outlined is in the possession of, not only the mature man and woman, but our older children also. Vast domains of knowledge are being daily brought within the grasp of their understanding. New methods of study obtain, and the very at-

mosphere of the modern classroom is something so utterly different from what we were accustomed to in our school-days, that it is not an exaggeration to say that modern education is a new thing. Subjects are taught in the High School, for instance, which had no place in our curriculum. Of these subjects, three especially have a most important bearing upon any conception of the Bible. They are natural science, comparative literature and history. I include history because as it is taught today it is really a new branch of learning. Indeed, all these subjects are taught with a wealth of knowledge, a respect for reality, and a freedom of presentation that were utterly lacking a generation ago. Thus even among our children the scientific, literary and historical spirit is more or less keenly apprehended as the modern atmosphere through which things, events and theories are seen and judged. For five days in the week they study under teachers who are well versed in their special departments, natural science, history, physical geography, Greek and Latin. They are not only being instructed, they are being educated; they are

encouraged to ask questions and to search for answers. And when they open their Bibles in the Sunday-school, the questioning spirit comes with them, though it may not, alas, always find expression. But at the back of their young minds some such questions as these are present: Is this real history that I am reading? Are there not different accounts of the same events to which different motives are attached? Are not many of the stories here of precisely the same nature as those in my Latin and Greek Readers which I have learned are myths and legends? How far does the Book of Genesis agree with my science books? More of our children are asking these and other questions like them than we imagine; and thus the Bible becomes a problem to them.

Now, what are you going to do about it? You may close your own minds to such difficulties without, perhaps, much harm coming to you; but it is morally certain that you cannot, without irreparable loss, close your children's minds. Nothing can prevent them asking these questions concerning the contents and character and meaning of

the Bible. And they must be answered; they must be answered frankly in the light of the best available knowledge; and they must be answered by you, or by some one whose Christian character and general knowledge are a guarantee of integrity. I can scarcely emphasize this too strongly; for it is a matter of common observation that not knowledge, but the way knowledge is presented to the mind, is of the utmost importance. I can, for example, tell my children that the account of creation in the Book of Genesis is a great prose poem. Now, I could say that with a sneer which would degrade the whole Bible in their minds for ever. Or, I could say it in a way that would elevate the very idea of a prose poem into a vehicle for the transmission of profound eternal truth. Which method shall I employ if, in these difficult and transitional days, I desire to preserve the reverence of my children for the Bible? One of the most pressing duties before us as parents and friends of the young, is that we must see to it that we do not ignore the human and progressive elements in the Bible, that we do not insist on its equal value

throughout, and that we do not treat reverent criticism of its documents as an enemy of religion. We must demand frankness and honesty, as well as reverence and devotion, both in the pulpit and in the Bible School, if we desire to see our children earnest and intelligent members of the Church when they become men and women. For to them, and especially to the most intelligent of them, the Bible has already become a problem; and we can no more safely evade the questions which pass legitimately from the Day School and the University to the Sunday School and the Church, than we can safely evade the natural laws under which we live.

Then there is a second class to whom the Bible has become a problem. I mean those men and women who have been brought up in the traditional view of it, but who have become aware that there is another view which is now being taught in every competent theological seminary in the land; and they are puzzled, sometimes even profoundly hurt by what they think is a desecration of the Word of God, an unwarranted violation of a Divine Book. They

are, it may be, not scholars themselves, yet the work of scholars is now open to them. Through all kinds of mediums the results of historical, literary and textual study of the Bible are now plainly put before their minds. They have either read or heard it stated that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses, but is a compilation many times edited of several distinct documents; that few, if any, of the Psalms were written by David; that nobody knows who wrote Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs and Proverbs; that there were two Zechariahs and several Isaiahs; that the Book of Jonah is not history; that Paul did not write the Epistle to the Hebrews, nor Peter the second Epistle bearing his name, and so forth.

Now there is no doubt whatever that the published findings of what is called "Higher Criticism" are simply bewildering to the average person who has been taught to believe in a dead level of Biblical inspiration, and who can discern no vital difference between the mind of Christ and the mind of a Hebrew law-maker, or between the mind of a great poet-prophet and the mind of a ritualistic priest. And aside altogether

from the lack of spiritual discernment which this confusion reveals, I think the perplexity springs out of a fatal misunderstanding of the real significance of the Bible in the first place, and of the work of scholars in the second place.

Let me remind you again, then, that the Bible has a literary history. It was produced by different men, at different times, and under differing conditions. It has been edited and re-edited many times, and has suffered many things at the hands of translators and interpreters. As such a collection of documents, it belongs to the historical and literary scholars as much as Homer and Virgil, Dante and Shakspere belong to them. It is the stupendous and necessary work of the scholar to get behind the crude mass of received opinions, and to come as near as possible to "the actual historic processes" by which the Bible has come to be just what it now is. He endeavors to discover the age in which the various books were written, the men who wrote them, the circumstances out of which they sprang, and the relation which they bear to one another and to the larger history of mankind. But

none of these questions primarily concerns faith at all. They are questions of scholarship, and can only be settled by scholars. They can never be settled by faith; they are dependent wholly upon facts.

III

But the Bible has not only a literary history, it has a moral and spiritual history. And here it passes out of the hands of the historian and the critic into the heart of humanity. To measure the historical and literary value of the Bible is one thing, to measure its moral and spiritual worth is another and a very different thing. This is what we are apt to forget. The books of the Bible are just what they are, whoever wrote them, and whenever they were written. They are here, and their moral quality is here also. While noble men are engaged upon the history in the Bible, and the literary forms in which that history is embedded, and are minutely deciphering tablets and monuments that shed light upon it, its moral and spiritual force continues. The work of the scholar is not yet finished; it will not be completed in our day. But

suppose it were all done, suppose we knew the exact sources of the histories, the prophetic books, the poems and the wisdom literature of the Old Testament, and suppose we knew the sources of the Gospels and the Acts, and who wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Pastoral letters—suppose we knew all this with absolute final knowledge, the real problem of the Bible would still remain. What is it worth to us? How are we to discover its worth? Here are two questions outside the realm of mere scholarship. They are questions which are of the deepest concern to everyone of us. And they require a different test than that which the tools of the scholar supply.

It would seem that we have here reached the question of the Inspiration of the Scriptures. But the term itself has been so soiled by ignoble strife and infelicitous exposition that I think we should do better service to mankind if we let the doctrine rest awhile, and directed our strength of intellect and heart on the quality, the value and the power inherent in the Scriptures themselves. You may be sure of this, that if the Bible does not impress you with its own transcend-

ent spiritual and moral worth, no bare assertion—whether within its pages or without—that its author is God, could be of any permanent value to you. The inspiration of the Bible is not proved by assertion, however emphatic, but by simple experience. It is demonstrated when a man in the throes of a great temptation goes to the Bible and finds therein the word of power which delivers him; or when a woman crushed beneath a great sorrow hears such a word as this and believes it—"I will not leave you desolate: I will come unto you. Let not your heart be troubled"—and goes out into the world again with uplifted spirit conscious that her Lord walks with her in the way; or when a thinker burdened with modern problems of evil which seem insoluble pores over its pages till there flashes into his mind, there to stay forever, the tremendous conviction of the moral order of the world, that back of all the noise and fury of man's inhumanity to man

> "Standeth God within the shadow
> Keeping watch upon His own,"

and that within the historic process of the

world may be clearly seen a vast redemptive process whose final significance can be read in the light of the mind of Christ. This is how the Bible vindicates its right to the supreme place in the life of humanity which it has attained as the word of the Father to his child. "The Bible holds its place in literature," said Emerson, "not to miracles, but to the fact that it comes from a profounder depth of life than any other book." I know no other proof of inspiration which can be put in the same category with that which is to be found in the glorious history of the Bible as the inspirer of men and nations.

But I am not engaged here upon a eulogy of the Bible. In the light of its moral and spiritual history, eulogy seems almost an impertinence. But I am concerned that we should keep this aspect of the Bible absolutely distinct from either its historical or its literary aspect. To confuse them is to be guilty of a sad disservice to humanity. The worth of the Bible to you and me is not in its commas and colons, in the Jewish traditions as to its authorship, in its historical accuracy or inaccuracy here or there,

but in its whole purpose and spirit, in its progressive revelation of the will of God to man which finds its culmination in the disclosure of the Person and the Mind of Christ. The true glory of the Bible can only be understood, its imperishable elements can only be revealed as the mind of Christ is deliberately borne through all its pages as the absolute judge of their worth for mankind. We must bring to our study of history and psalm, of story and prophecy, of epistle and vision the mind of the Master. The Bible holds its exalted place in the heart of the world because of the Supreme Person revealed in it. And it is only as we really see Christ in it that we shall grasp its imperishable worth to our world for all ages.

And just here the work of the scholar has rendered inestimable service to the Bible where the Bible is deepest. At the heart of the Christian religion stands Jesus Christ, and next to him his greatest apostle, Paul. Our spiritual confidence in both these has been immeasurably deepened as the result of criticism. The historical character of Jesus, his personality and teachings, his

death and subsequent manifestations, his effect on his immediate followers; the conversion of Paul, his missionary career, and the authenticity of his greatest letters—all this, and much more, is more credible today as the result of critical investigation than it was even twenty or thirty years ago. It is easier for us to discover what the mind of Christ is, how it became the principle of Paul's own life, the test by which he desired his own teachings to be judged; and how it became the principle to which every subsequent interpretation of religion was, soon or late, brought up for judgment. And with the mind of Christ as the criterion of moral truth, the humblest student of the Bible will gain new insights and a deeper sense of that progress in revelation which the work of the scholar has at last made plain to us. He will be independent of all external authority in his search for the highest truth. He will know the truth, and the truth will make him free. If the final significance of the Old Testament is "its unconscious anticipation of Christ," surely the final significance of the New Testament is the overwhelming consciousness we find

there of the immanence of the mind of Christ in his followers. John, and Paul, and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews daringly brought the whole prophetic and historical past of the race under the judgment of the mind of Christ. They were conscious of possessing an absolute measure of truth and righteousness. Christ had made them free, and in their freedom they were not afraid to examine and measure the revelation of God in past ages with the revelation of God vouchsafed to them in their immediate experience of Christ. And with the same freedom, in the same experience, we can bring to bear upon their writings the same criterion. For we have the mind of Christ, and Christ has made us free. We not only can do this, but it is our pressing duty to do it, for only so can we be loyal to the Christ whose manifestation of God is the supreme glory of the Bible, and whose living presence in history and in the mind of man is the supreme glory of life.

Let me now sum up what I have been trying to say in this chapter. When men are perplexed by the Bible it is because they

have failed to judge it by the mind of Christ. How the Bible came to be just what it is—that is the work of the honest and competent scholar to discover. But what its nature is, as a self-disclosure of God to man, as the record of the progressive apprehensions of humanity concerning God—that is within the compass of every man and woman to know. And such knowledge is independent of critics—high or low—it is to be ascertained by the fearless, patient, sincere application of the mind of Christ, as manifested in history, in the experience of his immediate followers, and in the Christian consciousness of our own times, over the whole field of Biblical study. "Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus," then "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free."

III

THE MASTER LIGHT AND THE UNIVERSE

"For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God." *Rom. 8: 19.*

"But we have the mind of Christ." *1 Cor. 2: 16*

"Science and Religion are incommensurables, and there is no true antithesis between them—they belong to different universes of discourse. Science is descriptive and offers no ultimate explanation; Religion is mystical and interpretative, implying a realization of a higher order of things than those of sense-experience. . . . While Science can give no direct support to religious convictions, it establishes conclusions which the religious mood may utilize, just as philosophy utilizes them, and transfigure, just as poetry transfigures them." J. Arthur Thomson, *"Introduction to Science,"* pp. 224-225.

"The whole movement of human history is nothing but the increasing comprehension of what nature and man are, when brought into connection with the principle immanent in all things. If at first man seems to live in a world that is foreign to him, it yet is true that the whole development of civilization is the process by which the rationality of the universe is ever more clearly disclosed to him, as he obtains an ever fuller knowledge of the Spirit in whom he lives and moves and has his being." John Watson, *"The Philosophical Basis of Religion,"* p. 135.

"Uniformity is not simply a law that we find in nature; neither is it a category of the human mind which we impose upon nature; it is a synthesis of the Mind within nature and the mind within ourselves. Nothing will account for the law of uniformity in nature except a divine Mind, a Logos, which precedes and underlies and permeates the very structure and process of creation, constituting the universe a cosmos and not a chaos." John W. Buckham, *"Christ and the Eternal Order,"* p. 88.

CHAPTER III

THE MASTER LIGHT AND THE UNIVERSE

THE second great problem of our day concerns itself with the universe. What is its meaning? How may we test the worth for life of any theory of the universe? First of all let me remind you that science has demonstrated that the universe is really a universe, not a multiverse. There is not one world for the scientist, another for the philosopher, another for the theologian, and still another for the common man. You and I live in precisely the same world which the teachers of our day inhabit and which they seek to explain. We are, indeed, indebted to the scientist for our knowledge of the facts and forces in Nature; we are indebted to the philosopher and the theologian for the concepts through which these facts and forces may be seen and correlated; but to both facts and concepts it is not only our high privilege but our pressing duty to

bring some great principle of interpretation. The fact that we all live together in one universe surely demands that we seek to understand it; but it is not foolishly presumed here that our understanding will ever be complete. The world of nature in which our lives is set is too complex, and reveals itself in too fragmentary a manner to permit us ever to say that we have encompassed all knowledge. "We know in part, and prophecy in part," but we believe that "when that which is perfect is come," it will not contradict the part which has already come. It is the inspiring task of the investigator to decrease the realm of the unknown, and to bring to bear upon it, ever more and more, the light of the part that is known in the assurance that the universe which he seeks to describe is a single whole which can be rationally interpreted. As the French philosopher, Prof. E. Boutroux, says: "The history of science proves that we have a right to affirm a continuity between what we know and what we do not know." (Quoted by J. A. Thomson in his "Introduction to Science.")

I

It is when we come to ask for the meaning of the whole, what lies behind and within all things, that our problem arises. For here, modern thought, employing the discoveries of science, speaks with three voices. The first of these is the voice of agnosticism. It is perhaps the prevailing voice of science. The scientist does not say that nothing can be known of the ultimate meaning of things, but only that he does not know. The noble agnosticism of the man of science is of another order than that of the smart agnosticism of the man in the street.

For the man of science we can have nothing but the profoundest respect, admiration and gratitude. He is a fellow-worker in the cause of truth with all lovers of the truth. And of all workers, the true scientist is our supreme type of modesty. He, more than any other man, recognizes the fragmentariness of his knowledge. He may declare, in the words of Tyndale which so startled our fathers, that he "finds in matter the promise and potency of all terrestrial life;" but he will add, "What matter is in

its essence no one knows, we can only know it from what it does." As a biologist he goes through the House of Life with scalpel and microscope and test-tube, and makes the wonderful discovery that every living being, from the simplest to the most complex, arises from a little cell of living substance which he calls protoplasm; but he is not afraid to say that no one knows why of two cells, between which no microscope and no laboratory test can detect the smallest difference, one can develop only to a jellyfish, and the other only to a human being. As a psychologist he may say, "We know that all the thoughts we think, and all the emotions we feel, involve a physical process;" but he adds, "the gulf between consciousness and the movements of nerve matter is impassable." He may regard the universe as "the manifestation of one vast energy for ever changing its form and progressing in its manifestations;" but he refuses to name this force, resting content with the assertion that it is the same "as that which in ourselves wells up in the form of consciousness." For all such attitudes as these we can have, I say, only feelings of respect. They are the

recognition of the limitations of science before the problem of the universe.

But the second voice of modern thought, employing the language of science, recognizes no limitations. It declares that the universe has already given up its secret, that all is known; and it regards the ultimate reality as physical force, or energy. To it the universe is all dumb blind matter in process of unconscious evolution. It declares that the force which forms our universe, and rises to rational, moral and spiritual life in man, and to Divine consciousness in Jesus, is nothing more than physical energy playing with molecules of matter. It should be said at once that this is not the voice of science as science, but rather the voice of a philosophy built upon some of the results, and using the nomenclature of science. It begins where strict science ends. If the scientist says that mechanism rules in the inorganic world, the philosophic materialist declares that it rules also in the organic world, and in the world of mind. From this point of view the whole inner world of man is a pathetic illusion; and Nature is but a convenient name for a mind-

less, conscienceless, heartless conflict of mechanical or brutal forces; and the cosmos itself is nothing but a theatre of a vast ineluctable tragedy which dogs the steps of beast and man alike.

The effect of this view upon the human mind is a horrible pessimism, the banishment of any faith in ideals, of trust in any Divine Helper, and of hope in any persistence of personality beyond the grave. There can be no room, and therefore no aspiration for independent spiritual forces and values where the life of the mind itself is accepted as a mere by-product of physical mechanism.

But this thorough-going mechanical conception of the universe, which blossomed out in the eighteenth century into a materialistic philosophy, has now little standing among men of science, or among men of highest education anywhere. It is, however, the misfortune of our times that it still exists in cheap reprints of discredited books which are eagerly devoured by the half-educated and impressionable masses. Let me assert again, then, that materialism is not a scientific conclusion. There is no scientist writing today who is more thoroughly

equipped for his task, or has more fine moments of insight, than Prof. J. A. Thomson of Aberdeen. He tells us that we have no warrant for asserting that the physical conceptions of matter and energy, abstracted off for scientific purposes, exhaust the reality of nature. The life of the organism not only implies a succession of chemical and physical forces. It also implies "a co-ordination, a purposiveness, an individuality, a creative agency, a power of trading with time, a history—in all of which it transcends mechanism." And with the fall of the mechanistic theory of the universe, the materialistic philosophy built upon it, falls also.

Once more, in a frank and exceedingly able book on "Evolution," written in collaboration with his friend Patrick Geddes, Prof. Thomson speaks of the refusal of the secret of life to be formulated, of how repeatedly that secret slips past the biologist, and then he says: "Yet though intelligence fails, do we not at times come nearer to it through sympathy? Wordsworth, Emerson, Meredith, these and many other Nature-poets are perhaps the truest, because

the deepest, biologists of us all." This frank acknowledgment that the secret of life eludes the microscope and the test-tube, and is to be approached rather through the exalted insight of the poet, is the justification—if justification be needed—of the constructive imagination which seeks to advance beyond the last outpost of science, in its endeavor to elucidate the problem of the universe.

It is to this I am now come. For modern thought, still gratefully employing the results of science, speaks with a third voice which, year by year being heard with greater distinctness and power, is now beginning to command the keenest intellects of our time. With the scientist it admits that "matter" is known only through what it does, but declares that it makes itself known to us, not only as the substance of that which we call the material world, but also as the medium of life and thought, the instrument and expression of spirit. It regards the universe, with science, as a manifestation of one vast energy, but declares that we cannot think of this energy as something less than what it shows itself to be in us—

mind, will, spirit; rational and moral. In those beautiful lines of Wordsworth which have surely endeared themselves to all lovers of poetry, it says:

"For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing often-times
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh, nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things."

Or, in the stricter language of science itself, it declares with John Fiske, in his "Idea of God," "The universe is not a machine, but an organism, with an indwelling principle of life. It was not made, but has grown. . . . We see all things working together through countless ages of toil and trouble, toward one glorious consummation." It beholds the whole creation, as St. Paul beheld

it, groaning and travailing together, waiting for the revealing of the sons of God. It sees Nature leaning ever toward mind, seeking ever to express spirit; the evolution of the world, through countless retrogressions and obstacles, ever a movement toward a spiritual goal,—first that which is inorganic, then that which is organic, and then that which is rational, "love, and man's unconquerable mind," not only as the last term of the evolution of things, but as transcending things, as becoming the judge, the measure of things.

II

The plain fact is that the materialistic view of the universe has arisen through the monumental mistake of interpreting man's total environment by its lowest terms instead of by its highest. The question of the meaning of the universe and the purpose of life can be settled neither by an appeal to the mechanics of existence, nor to that Nature which is "red in tooth and claw with ravine." It is a principle of modern criticism in art and literature and music

that a man's total achievement should be appraised in the light of his highest and best work. The critic who habitually fails to do this is ruled out of the kingdom of letters with contempt. Now, it is this principle of interpretation which we must carry into life, and bring to bear upon the problem of the universe. At the head of the mighty movement and procession of Nature stands her highest achievement—Man. As a great biologist puts it, "we feel sure that organisms reveal a deeper aspect of reality than crystals do, and that in this sense there is more in the plant than in the crystal, more in the animal than the plant, more in the bird than in the worm, more in man than in them all." And this vast world of things and forces is man's home which he has a right to interpret by the highest he discovers in himself. In our childhood days we were taught to sing

"I'm but a stranger here,
Heaven is my home.
Earth is a desert drear,
Heaven is my home."

We sing that hymn no more; at least the most intelligent of us. Science has made

it forever impossible as the expression of man's place in the universe. Man stands here, as biology has indisputably proven, not as a stranger, not as an alien, but as the legitimate "child of the world's life." Man is here, and in his Father's house. He is here with his intellect, his power of looking before and after; he is here in fellowship as a social being; he is here with his conscience, his awareness of obligation, and his profound misgiving and distress when he fails to fulfil his obligation; he is here with his reverence, his love, his instinct for worship, his sense of the supreme value of ideals and of the necessity laid upon him to incarnate those ideals. And all this must enter into any measurement of the meaning of the other facts and principles which science has made clear to us, and of their place in a universe of reality. For "no view of the world can for a moment be treated as worthy of consideration that offers no explanation of the highest product of evolution, the intellectual, social, moral and religious life of man." *

*G. R. Dodson. "The Synoptic Mind," Harvard Theological Review, January, 1911.

But here again we have to ask: What man is the measure of all things? Are we to judge the universe by the brutalities, confusions, suspicions, fears and appetites of its meaner souls? or are we to judge it by the ideals, aspirations, faiths, wisdom, achievements and fellowships in love and hope of its finer souls? Surely there can be but one answer. The perfect man must be the perfect measure of all things. We have seen that the highest product of the universe is man, and the Christian position is that man came to his highest and best in the Man Christ Jesus. To our world, it is Jesus who is "the concrete universal, the beautiful life—not only individually beautiful and complete, as a work of art, but the greatest energizing power for beauty, truth and goodness." And we have the mind of Christ. The monumental fact remains that, in spite of what has been fiercely called the "dissolution of dogmas and the crash of creeds," the supremacy of Jesus in the world of human souls is indisputable; and the forces which he revealed and embodied in his life did not pass away with his death. They have become ever more and

more the conquering forces in the life of mankind.

We simply cannot face the question of the ultimate worth or worthlessness of the universe without asking: What did Jesus think about it? What did he think the perfect ends of life were? What he did with his own life is open to any man to read. He did not lose it amid the harsh conditions and lowly circumstances of a mechanic's occupation. We may be sure, though of this we have no record, that he glorified labor by the spirit which he brought to it. When he emerged from the carpenter's shop it was with the clearest of convictions that the greatest fact in his world was the fact of his soul, and with a profound sense of its infinite worth as the measure of things. He knew the loneliness of the wilderness, the brutality of nature and of man, and the spectres that face all great thinkers on the problem of life; he knew the forces which make against truth and goodness: the whole tragedy and sin of human life was an open book to him. Yes, he knew all these things. It seems sometimes as if they poured the full strength of their poisonous waters upon

him. What, then, was his attitude toward these stern and relentless foes of optimism? It was an attitude of conquering tranquillity. In the wilderness he fought them and overcame them; in the busy marts of men he fought and overcame them. Undismayed, the Son of Man went about doing good,—doing good and discovering good. In the vicious, in the outcasts of society, in the men and women defeated in the struggle for life he discovered a moral worth which neither they nor the world about them had suspected; and he taught them to realize their worth for God, to achieve character, and to live in right personal relations with one another.

"And so the Word had breath, and wrought
With human hands the creed of creeds
In loveliness of perfect deeds,
More strong than all poetic thought."

"He took his life," as Dr. Gordon so finely puts it, "with its superlative wisdom and goodness, from his baptism to his crucifixion, and gave it in one continuous sacrifice in attestation of his sense of the worth of the human soul."

Now it is to the sanity and universality of the teaching of Jesus; to his habitual attitude toward nature and man—his delight in the one, and his sacrificial sympathy with the other;—to his glorious service to his own generation; to his undisturbed sense of filial communion with God; to his consciousness of a unique vocation as the world's Redeemer; and to his absolute loyalty to that vocation—it is to all this that the problem of the universe comes up for judgment. For these things did not perish upon Calvary, they are constituent elements and forces in the world's life. And once we bring the problem of the universe to the test of the mind of Christ, then life and all its issues gather new meaning. What are the perfect ends of life according to Jesus? For the Mind there is truth, the absolute harmony between thought and reality: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." For the Will there is goodness, the serious task of bringing into accord the ideal and the achievement in character, the harmony between what is and what ought to be: "Ye therefore shall be perfect as your Father in Heaven is per-

fect." And for the Heart there is love, the supreme self-giving in which man's life is brought into harmony with the life of God: "Love your enemies, pray for them that persecute you, that we may be sons of your Father which is in Heaven." It is in the light of these eternal and inspiring ends that the meaning of the universe is to be sought.

The sane advice of Dr. G. R. Dodson is in order here: "Put together the two things that belong together, man and the universe, and then ask what kind of a universe is it that is flowering out into a human world of thought and love and righteousness, of joy and peace and hope." Yes, if you will do this in fellowship with, and under the eternal guidance of the mind of Christ, it will be impossible for you to believe yourself a beast and the universe a meaningless mechanism. The mind of Christ has been long at work upon the minds of men, and the criticism to which the exigencies of life have subjected it for two thousand years has only made it more clear and precious. And the great word for this age is that the ideas and ideals of Jesus are at home in the universe, for Jesus also was the legiti-

mate child of the world's life. He was no stranger here, no alien, no transient visitor; he was the Son of Man, bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, spirit of our spirit. And the ideals of Jesus are reproducible in us because they are realities in the moral universe of man, and in the being of God "in whom we live and move and have our being."

Man is not here, then, as an empty boat tossed about by the waves of a lawless sea. He is here as a strong swimmer battling with the waves, aware that there is a shore, and of his strength to reach it, and using the very forces of the sea to bear him thither. A materialistic philosophy is possible only when one thinks of man and the universe under the symbol of the boat at the mercy of the waves. But when one thinks of man as a conscious swimmer glorying in his skill, he becomes aware of Mind, of Will, of Purposiveness in the universe. And when from the swimmer we lift our eyes to that gracious and Supreme Person who declared that he had overcome the world, and when we witness the progressive realization in human history of the forces which he re-

vealed as controlling his life, then we are able to conclude that at the heart of our universe is a Mind, Will, Spirit, which must be equal to its highest product—the mind of Christ.

IV

THE MASTER LIGHT AND THE BEING OF GOD

"Oh that I knew where I might find him!
That I might come even to his seat." *Job 23: 3.*

"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." *St. John 14: 9.*

"In him we live and move and have our being." *Acts 17: 28.*

"The religious consciousness, in its essential meaning, is the consciousness of a Being who embraces all our life and gives unity and direction to it, who lifts us above ourselves and binds our limited and transitory existence to the eternal. . . . To think, to feel, to will—all the forms of our consciousness—are ultimately bound up with the idea of an all-comprehending whole; and to believe in a God is, in the last resort, simply to realize that there is a principle of unity in that whole, akin to that which gives unity to our own existence as self-conscious beings." Edward Caird, *"The Evolution of Theology in the Greek Philosophers,"* Vol. 1, pp. 32-33.

"The Christian confidence in God begins so far back as to include the confidence that we naturally have in ourselves—in our senses, our rational faculties, and our moral powers. It includes confidence in the world as an honest world and the universe as a universe of reality and truth, in which knowledge is trustworthy and religion is not vain; . . . confidence that the rational order is grounded in the eternal reason and the moral order in the eternal righteousness. . . . Indeed, it is in the strength of this primal confidence that we respond to the Christian revelation itself. When we put our trust in the God of Jesus Christ, that which speaks in the voice of faith is the soul claiming its birthright; for such a God is the birthright of man." W. N. Clarke, *"The Christian Doctrine of God,"* pp. 465-466.

"From the first, Power was—I knew.
Life has made clear to me
That, strive but for closer view,
Love were as plain to see."
R. Browning, *"Reverie," in "Asolando."*

CHAPTER IV

THE MASTER LIGHT AND THE BEING OF GOD

I TRIED to show you in the last chapter that any theory of the worth or worthlessness of the universe must be brought to the test of its supreme achievement. The fact of man's presence here as the legitimate child of the world's life, and all that this fact involves, must be taken into account when we would measure the meaning of the other facts and principles which science has made clear to us, and of their place in a universe of reality.

Now this utter involvement of man with the universe, which is the discovery of biology, remains the problem of theology. If man is here, not as a stranger, not as an alien, but as an organic strand of the great bundle of life, it is of the utmost importance for him to know, or to come as near to knowing as he may, what is the nature of that which lies at the heart of the bundle. If

anything is certain in the world it is this, "that fundamental ideas about life rule life," and that men and nations will find their real worth depending upon their ruling conceptions of what lives and works and rules in the universe. Hence we have come to the gravest of all problems—the Being of God. We have here to face two questions. The first has to do with the existence of God; the second with the character of God.

I

Is there a God at all? That is our first question. May I begin by admitting frankly that it is a question which can never be answered in any way that shall be equally convincing to every mind? The very nature of our question puts strict demonstration out of court. The fact of God's existence cannot be "proved" as science, for example, proves her smaller facts; nor yet as the man of logic marshalls his truths, by the aid of magic syllogisms. But all this need not disturb us in any way. For after all it is an exceeding small fragment of truth that reaches us by the way of demonstration; and

there are other paths by which truth may be approached than that blazed out by logic. This is why the old abstract arguments for the existence of God, in which our fathers so delighted, have now been largely abandoned. It is seen now that, however they may seem to help men, no man ever attains to a knowledge of God through such arguments alone. Indeed, some have even lost the God they had while seeking to prove that they had him. It was of such abstractions that the young and facetious mind of the eighteenth century expressed its judgment when it said of Samuel Clarke's Boyle Lectures on "The Being and Attributes of God," that no one doubted the existence of God until Clarke sought to prove it. The fact is that we are here not in the region of intellectual abstractions at all, but of concrete realities, of experience, of life. And it is, as a later Dr. Clarke has said, "by the testimony of other facts, or realities, reasonably interpreted, that the existence and character of God must be established."

Most of you know something of the ways by which men have sought intellectually to arrive at the knowledge, or the probability,

of the existence of God. There is first of all the way of modern science; though, as we have seen, that way does not lead us very far. Science is occupied with the tremendous and honorable task of exploration. It is searching for the facts of the universe. But behind the facts the chief men of science now venture to postulate at least an "inscrutable Power," to account for them. We owe that very phrase, along with some better things, to the late Mr. Herbert Spencer. Toward the close of his career he acknowledged that "the consciousness of an inscrutable Power manifest to us through phenomena has been growing ever clearer, and must eventually be freed from all its imperfections." I suppose that Christian thinkers are expected to be grateful for this admission. It is true that we are upon the borders of philosophy here, yet this vision of an ultimate Reality accounting for "matter" and "energy," even though it goes undefined, still makes a doctrine of God possible. And it may be worth while to recall some words of Mr. J. A. Symonds, the historian of the Renaissance. "It cannot be too emphatically insisted on," he said

once, "that the much-dreaded Darwinism leaves the theological belief in a Divine Spirit untouched. In other words, spirituality is restored to nature." By this last phrase he claims that science has recovered from the profane handling to which it had been subjected by the naturalistic philosophers who declared that the universe was nothing but a vast soulless machine. As time goes on this is becoming more and more evident. M. Bergson tells us in his recent "Huxley Lecture" (May, 1911), that he doubts "that the evolution of life will ever be explained by a mere combination of mechanical forces. Obviously there is a vital impulse . . . something which ever seeks to transcend itself, to extract from itself *more* than there is—in a word, to create. Now, a force which draws from itself more than it contains, which gives more than it has, is precisely what is called a *spiritual* force; in fact, I do not see how otherwise spirit is to be defined." Elsewhere in the same great lecture, M. Bergson says that "what we call 'the mind' is, before all, something conscious —it is consciousness." And he defines consciousness as "a force essentially free and

essentially memory," and again, as an "essentially creative force."

Now, of course, all this is the peculiar dialect of philosophical science; but the point to notice is that it does not forbid our asking: Whence has this mind, this consciousness, this creative force which is free and has memory, arisen? We are far indeed from mere talk of physical force, or energy. We have been led by science itself to speak of a vital impulse, of a spiritual force which is behind all, and in all, and which gives purpose and meaning to all. We need not be afraid of the scientist then, he works under a profound conviction of the intelligibility of the universe, and the more honestly he works and thinks, the more the results of his work and thought are made known, the more impossible will it seem to men to account for this wonderful universe of ours except upon the belief that within it is a Creative Intelligence, that behind all physical forces lie spiritual forces, that the physical life itself moves and has its being in a spiritual life, that—in a word—the only rational explanation of the phenomena of nature is God.

Another way by which men have sought to arrive at the conviction of God's existence is the swift and secret path of human intuition. It is the solitary way of the mystic. Upon this path you will hear no argument such as philosophers use, and none of the instruments of research so dear to the scientist will be found thereon; you will hear only the bold language of assertion, and see only the ecstatic vision of the individual seer. Yet, and in spite of its vagaries, mysticism has a legitimate function in the process of spiritual discovery and has inspired some of the greatest religious literature of ancient and modern times. Like Aurora Leigh, the true mystic beholds God everywhere,—

> "Earth's crammed with heaven,
> And every common bush afire with God."

The mystic does not search for God. He believes that no one by searching can find out God. God finds him. He simply sees God as Faust saw him,—

> "The All-enfolding,
> The All-upholding.
> Folds and upholds He not
> Thee, Me, Himself?"

There is no process of reasoning here. All is immediate rapt apprehension. It is the spiritual eye seeing what it longs to see, and making no effort to test the validity of its vision. The vivid impression of God's presence and power in nature and in his own soul is enough for the mystic. To seek to know more of God than is immediately vouchsafed to him would seem an impertinence to be rebuked. It was surely the mystical mind of the ancient Greek that created the deathless story of Cupid and Psyche. "Ah! why light our little candles," it seems to say, "to look curiously upon that which brings us life and hope, joy and love? See what happens when we do. The god vanishes to return only after bitter penances and weary experiences." And this is the fundamental characteristic of mysticism in all its forms. Unchecked by any other mode of apprehending God it leads to the wildest emotionalism, and to a sort of inferno of delirious theology. But safeguarded, corrected, purified by sober thought and by the moral inspirations of social service, mysticism lies at the heart of all religion worth having and all philosophy worth while, and

lends support and enforcement to man's eternal quest after God.

Then there is a third way which is, we may say, merely the second way thought out. It is the way of Self-consciousness. Let me put the argument in its most familiar form without criticizing it. Along with the awareness of Self in man has gone the sense of Another Self from which he can no more escape than from the air which he breathes. God presses upon, "haunts" the human spirit, making his awful presence felt in the deeps of man's nature. This sense of God within man is itself the verification of something that corresponds to it. It is not self-created. If there were no God at all man would be incapable of thinking so tremendous a thought as that of his existence. God is, so to speak, not only assumed but really involved in the very structure of human personality; so that thinking, man thinks God; feeling, he feels his utter dependence upon God; and willing, he becomes aware of the urgency of another and a higher will ever pressing upon his own.

Now we have not learned very much

about God as yet. But I wish to point out that most speculation concerning the existence of God proceeds along one or the other or a combination of these three ways so inadequately outlined. All that we can just now assert is our profound conviction that God does exist. But of the nature of this God whom we say exists we have learned little. We have simply reached the idea of an Ultimate Reality which is Mind, Will, Spirit; but whether this Ultimate Reality works for us or not, of that we have learned nothing. But this is just what we most need to know. God as Power, as Creative Intelligence, as

> "a flash of the will that can,
> Existent behind all laws: that made them, and, lo, they are!"

is a conception which by itself might make the moral hope of the race a ghastly irony. The very idea of Power frightens us until we learn of what sort it is. How, then, may we come to know it? This is the question to which we must now turn.

II

We have agreed in this inquiry that man must be the measure of all things, that for our perfect measure we must appeal to the highest we know, and that this highest and best is the man Christ Jesus. So even here, if our intellectual, social, moral and religious life is not to fall into utmost confusion, we can dare the assertion that God must at least be Christ-like. What God is in himself and to himself we may never know, but what God is in his relation to us we must discover if our life is to have any meaning. What, then, has come to us by this fourth way, the mind of Christ? We speak of the disclosure of God in the mind of Christ. What is it of God that we find expressed there? It is this—and it is the most vital thing for us—the character of God. This is what we most needed to know. We heard of God through the researches of science, we caught glimpses of him by intuition in nature, we felt him in the deeps of our consciousness, but all our soul cried out to know him. How does God feel toward me? Does

he care in the least for my little life set in the midst of the awful forces of nature? Will he help me to realize my destiny as a spiritual being?

Now these are questions touching the character of God and his relations to mankind, and they are answered by Christ in two ways: in words and in deeds. Of course you will find in the words of Jesus no abstract statements, no definitions of God such as philosophers and theologians have delighted in. Jesus never discussed the "Absolute," he never catalogued what are known as the "attributes" of God. That was not his task. He did more than that: he revealed God in ways which man could understand, in the only way indeed by which man could really learn what God is like—the practical concrete way of a personal life lived openly before men. He called men to see God manifested in his own life. "I and the Father are one." "He that hath seem me hath seen the Father." Whatever else we may venture to think about Jesus we are bound to admit that he claimed to have made an adequate revelation of God's nature, will, and relations to mankind. He

did not hesitate to call himself "the light of the world," and to declare that his supreme business on earth was to manifest God. Indeed it is not too much to assert that the whole life of Jesus as reflected in the Gospels is bounded by his tremendous conviction that he lived in the Father, and the Father lived in him, that the works which the Father did he did also. And what works they were! As we turn over the leaves of the precious stories of his career we see Jesus healing men of their sicknesses, showing pity to the unfortunate, teaching the ignorant, facing the vilest evil in men with a lovingness and a patient goodness that conquered it and won their hearts. And in all that life of perpetual ministry we are asked to discern not alone the grace and truth of Jesus, but also the grace and truth of the Father who sent him; not simply a few scattered deeds of mercy, but in those deeds a manifestation of the Eternal Mercy at the heart of things, a creative Lovingkindness ever at work for our redemption. "My Father worketh hitherto and I work" is a declaration which connects in a vital way the eternal work of God with

the temporary (if the term be allowed for a moment) work of Jesus. The conviction that he was manifesting in the field of time the eternal creative work of the Father never left him. In the solemn valedictory prayer recorded in the Fourth Gospel these great words occur: "I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do, I have manifested thy name." Here is something that was either the baldest and most pathetic of illusions, or else a supreme truth which declares that we have in the mind of Christ and the deeds which expressed it our incomparable measure of the mind of God. And when at last we look long and earnestly on this "strange Man upon his Cross" we discern not the Saviourhood of Christ alone, but the very Saviourhood of God himself. Here the mind of Christ yields the highest and holiest revelation of the Divine that can ever be made to man. The sacrificial soul of our Lord as the measure of the Sacrificial Soul at the core of the universe—surely human thought cannot transcend that!

But the mind of Christ expressed itself also in definite teaching, and when we turn

to that teaching to know the attitude of God toward our world of suffering, struggling, sinning, aspiring humanity, what do we find? It is all summed up in the amazing phrase of one of his disciples: God is love. To Jesus everything he saw and experienced spoke of a ceaseless creative Love as the power at the heart of our world. Nature was never to him "red in tooth and claw with ravine." Behind the falling sparrow was love. It was love that fed the birds of the air and clothed the flowers of the field with beauty. Within the common processes of nature worked the spiritual forces of love, and man, the legitimate child of nature, could trust those forces and coöperate with them. His teaching concerning the kingdom of God was pressed home to the mind by illuminating analogies drawn from nature. It is like the "one pearl of great price," which the merchant found; it is like a "treasure hidden in a field." Or, closer still, and from the very processes of nature: It is like "leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened." It is like "a grain of mustard seed," that grows large enough to become a haven for

the birds. And it is like a seed growing secretly, "no man knoweth how," and yet the great harvest of ripened fruit comes. One cannot read the nature-parables with any care without discerning that "the Infinite and Eternal Energy through which all things proceed" is, in the mind of Christ, essentially redemptive energy, the ceaseless energy of Almighty Love. And when Jesus would bring his own consciousness of this Infinite and Eternal Love-energy to the hearts and lives of his contemporaries he had only one name for it, the name Father: the holiest, tenderest word ever spoken to the sinful, troubled heart of man. With that word the revelation of God in the mind of Christ was complete, and the task of men in all the ages that have followed has been, through an increasing possession of the mind of Christ, to advance in the understanding of the meaning of that name and the world-function for which it is the adequate symbol.

We shall have more to say of this when we come to discuss the value of man, but it is hoped that the last two paragraphs will not be dismissed with scorn because of the

brief and inadequate manner in which they have been written. God is more and greater than our greatest thought of him, he is more and greater than any symbol we can use to describe him. We may think of God as Light for the conscience, as Truth for the mind, as Love for the heart, as the Eternal Good-will forever acting even when we do not recognize his activity; yet when we have gathered together all our concepts and symbols it must be with the recognition that the Infinite Reality which corresponds to these must be greater than them all. God is beyond our definitions, but he is not therefore beyond our apprehension. The conviction that God is love is something far grander and deeper than a mere mental concept, it is a spiritual intuition which arises into consciousness as the mind that was in Christ becomes the mind that is in us.

The distinction so disastrously common a few years ago and still maintained by some teachers, between God as the Creator of man and the Father only of the consciously Christian man, has no place in the mind of Christ. There God is seen as ceaseless creative Love; there Creatorship is Father-

hood. As we have already seen, God as creative intelligence may be a sublime idea, but it adds very little to the "Infinite and Eternal Energy" which science postulates for us; and God as "a flash of the will that can, existent behind all laws," tells us nothing of worth as to his relation to us. God might be all these and yet be nothing greater than the Setebos before whom Caliban grimaced and cringed in cowardly fear. But in the mind of Christ, intellect, power and will work through love, and are gathered into a true unity of perfect personality in the title "Holy Father." With the conviction of the Fatherhood of God we can enter into those intimate personal relations with him through which we not only find life but also interpret life.

And when we ourselves are thinking in a truly Christian manner we never think of God except in the terms of Jesus Christ. It is of the "God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" that we think. And when once we have really seen the Christ, we know that we have seen our God manifested in him who declared himself to be the Light of the World, and his one business on earth to

manifest forth God. This is what we mean, at least what some of us mean, when we speak of the mind of Christ as absolute for all Christian thought and experience of God. We feel that the truth with which we there come in contact is the ultimate truth of God; the fountain light of all our day, the master light of all our seeing, and that it claims our absolute devotion. For the vital thing is that as we come to experience the mind of Christ we become conscious of God at work in His world and upon our own souls. To us, as to St. Paul in the first Christian century, "there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord Jesus Christ through whom are all things, and we through him."

This is the Gospel for our age then. It is the Gospel of redemptive creation. It declares that the "energy," the "mind," the "will" of science and philosophy is Love, and defines its relations to mankind in the personal terms of Fatherhood. The very heart of this Gospel is its revelation of a God who works, and who works for all men all the time in all worlds: a Saviour-God

the same yesterday, today and for ever, whose character and purpose are truly disclosed in the mind of Christ, and whose service is perfect freedom. Having the mind of Christ we can say: "I believe in God. I believe in God the Father. I believe in God the Father Almighty. I believe in God the Father Almighty whose nature is Holy Love."

V

THE MASTER LIGHT AND THE VALUE OF MAN

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" *Psalm 8: 4.*

"Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows." *St. Matt. 10: 30.*

"How much then is a man of more value than a sheep?" *St. Matt. 12: 1.*

"The final religion must be one that has a worthy thought of man, and provides a task for him which will furnish the will with an adequate object and a supreme inspiration." B. P. Bowne, *"Personalism,"* p. 299.

"The cardinal appeal to history can find no higher norm, no more ultimate standard for the knowledge of what man's nature is than the Person of Christ. In His personality we have the concentration of His teaching and its authorization. What then are the primary realities of human nature revealed by the *personal* attitude of Jesus Christ to the seen and unseen worlds? The answer is chiefly, three, namely, the fellowship of God and man, the identification of the individual with human society, and the absolute and eternal worth of moral achievement." H. Wheeler Robinson, *"The Christian Doctrine of Man,"* p. 280.

"Alone in all history, he (Jesus Christ) estimated the greatness of man. One man was true to what is in you and me. He saw that God incarnates himself in man, and evermore goes forth anew to take possession of his world." R. W. Emerson, *The Cambridge "Address,"* July 15, 1838.

CHAPTER V

THE MASTER LIGHT AND THE VALUE OF MAN

In an earlier chapter we accepted the declaration of science that man is the legitimate child of the world's life; and we found it impossible to discuss the vital problems of today apart from the frank recognition of man's unseparable and intimate kinship with the Universe. We even exalted him to the seat of judgment concerning the worth of things around him. This was a bold thing to do, for it assumes that man himself is of supreme worth. We have now to discuss the validity of this assumption.

We ask: Has our personality any permanent worth amid the tremendous forces and processes of nature? This is no mere academic question, but one of supreme and practical concern to every man who thinks and feels, aspires and strives; and it has by no means always been answered in the affirmative. There is an aspect of science in

which man appears as but little removed from the brute of the jungle; there is a conception of philosophy in which human personality appears shorn of all distinction and permanence; and there is a conception of theology in which man appears so separated from God that he loses both moral worth and moral aspiration. It is the misfortune of our times that these withering conceptions of life have found popular expositors. Discredited by the nobler progressive thinkers of our day they yet reappear in cheap books and cheaper reprints that are the chief mental diet of half-developed minds. An acute critic has declared that throughout the evolutionary philosophy, as expounded by the late Mr. Herbert Spencer, "human society, human history, human existence is but an incident in the measureless process of the cosmos. It is a late comer in the immemorial play of the physical order; it is the remembrance of a guest that tarrieth but for a day." In this view humanity has not only lost its position in relation to God, but has fallen even below nature. Man here is not the judge, but the sport of the universe.

I

A distressing suspicion of the truth of this view of man has again and again invaded essentially believing minds in every generation. Thousands of years before Herbert Spencer made his gloomy generalizations the Hebrew poet who wrote the Eighth Psalm had felt its blighting influence. An eccentric expositor once chose to paraphrase the fourth verse of that Psalm as follows: "What is man? How great he must be, how mighty in intellect, how wonderful in soul, that thou, God, art mindful of him!" We readily concur in this expositor's exalted estimate of man, but we are compelled to deny the validity of his interpretation of the poet's mood. That mood was rather one of doubt and bewilderment, the result of an inner conflict in which pessimism and optimism fought for the mastery. The poet's recognition of man's lordship over nature lacks the note of confidence. That man was made a little lower than God was an ancient article of his creed, but he gave to it only a reluctant wondering assent. The predominant thought in his

mind was that of the insignificance of man amid the vast forces of nature; and this thought tempered his ecstasy over man's greatness.

Now this mood, in spite of many high visions which seem to contradict it, is the prevailing mood of the Old Testament. "Behold, thou hast made my days as handbreadths; and my life is as nothing before thee; surely every man at his best estate is altogether vanity." This sense of the brevity and the serious limitations of human life is to be found in poet and prophet and historian alike. "Thou hast made men like fish of the sea, like worms that have no ruler." Men are "like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down and withereth. For we are consumed in thine anger, and in thy wrath are we troubled." "Behold," cries Eliphaz, voicing the thoughts of the common people of his day, "he putteth no trust in his servants, and his angels he chargeth with folly: how much more them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is dust, who are crushed like the moth."

The Book of Job has been justly called the world's greatest epic of sorrow. It is written with a certain bravery of soul which appeals to every human heart, yet its intellectual courage falters before its own problem, and the attempted solution at the close is pathetic in its real futility. Ecclesiastes is the monumental expression of pessimism and disillusion in the midst of the commanding activities of life. It leaves us with a feeling of the utter vanity of human existence. All that we see and experience is "a life of nothings, nothing worth."

It is true that this profound sense of the worthlessness of human life is relieved by many glorious visions of a coming redemption in which both man and nature will share, and even by visions of the worth of the present life. There is the lofty conception of man in the opening chapters of Genesis, as created in the divine image—a conception which has proved supremely fruitful in modern theology. But that conception is followed immediately by the story of the fall of man, and a thick cloud rests ever upon the divine image. Then there is the consciousness of the worth of the individual

which we find in the great preaching of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. And there are other passages which must be familiar to you. But these "ventures of faith" of the bolder spirits seemed but prophetic madness to a people oppressed by the suspicion of their insignificance for God. An optimistic prophet might indeed cry, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever." But the rooted conviction in the hearts of men was "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the breath of Jahveh bloweth upon them; surely the people is grass." The vision of her supreme souls so far outdistanced the achievement of the nation as itself to breed a kind of despair. That the Old Testament rapture in God is very real and significant many beautiful lines testify.

"Whom have I in heaven but thee?
And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee."

But this rapt personal vision and desire is perpetually being dimmed by the prevailing and melancholy doubt regarding the human race, its relation to nature in which it is set,

and its significance for God toward whom it so stormily aspires.

When we open our New Testament we find ourselves in an entirely new world of thought and feeling. Old things have passed away, and all things have become new. Man has attained a new and a permanent dignity: "Now are we the sons of God." He knows, or may know, himself as the temple of the Holy Spirit, as living and moving and having his very being in the life of the Eternal. The commanding note to which all the music of the New Testament is set is this: "Who shall separate us from the love of God?" And the sublime vision which fills the soul is a vision of the infinite progress of humanity in moral worth under the immediate influence of an indwelling God. Here, surely, is a great gain in self-reverence and moral confidence, a great trust in a God not far from any man, in a power working mightily in the human soul, and a great optimism which dares to take account of the sorrow and sin and tragedy of the world, and yet rises victoriously above them. This new world of thought and feeling and insight demands an explanation.

Whence has it arisen? Upon what foundation has it been reared? The Christian answer is: It has arisen in the mind of Christ. It has been reared upon the teaching and personality of the man Christ Jesus. The truth of the infinite value of the human soul was first definitely set forth in the teaching of Jesus. That truth became eminently fruitful in succeeding generations because men came to see that it was incarnated in an ideal way in the personality of the Teacher, and that through him, through the impact of his mind upon them, it inspired and shaped their lives.

II

Let us look at this for a while. There is the direct teaching of Jesus. Let me remind you at the outset of the folly of expecting to find in that teaching anything like a philosophic doctrine of man. Jesus concerned himself with neither the philosophy nor the psychology of man. For any statement of man's origin as science understands it, and for any analysis of the human intellect, you will look in vain. You must

look elsewhere for these things. One of the glories of Plato lies in his exaltation of the human mind, in setting the reason of man far above the phenomenal world around him. "All the philosophers are agreed," he said, "that mind is the king of heaven and earth" (Philebus 28). But his kingly judge and "spectator of all time and existence" can only be the achievement of the very few, of the elect minds in each generation. It is not surprising, therefore, that Plato held the common man in great contempt. Like the Pharisees four hundred years after him, he would have said, "But this multitude that knoweth not the law are accursed."

It is the glory of Jesus that he exalted the whole race, that it was just with the worth of the multitude he was concerned, with the value of man as man apart altogether from his position in the scale of intelligence. It is evident that his concern was not with the supreme souls of his age only, but with the whole suffering, aspiring, human race. He discovered and exalted the average man. It was to his own disciples that he said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? and not one of them shall fall to

the ground without your Father: but the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows." But that this value was not confined to the conscious disciples is attested by many a noble saying; but by none more definitely than this epigrammatic justification for doing good on the Sabbath Day, addressed to the Pharisees, "How much then is a man of more value than a sheep!"

Now the contrast in both these sayings is between nature and man; and the declaration of Jesus is that they both have worth for God. St. Paul, in an unusual mood of irony, might ask, "Is it for oxen that God careth?" But the possibility of such a question falling from the lips of Jesus has only to present itself to be immediately rejected. The figure of Jesus as the lover of nature is permanently enshrined in the imagination of mankind. The sparrows on the house-top, the sheep on the hill-side, the very lilies of the field—how Jesus loved them all! If we dare to think of them today as all somehow included in the thought and love of our heavenly Father, it is because they were so

included in the mind of Christ. So closely did he associate the processes of nature with the activities of the Eternal Good-will that, as long as the sun continues to shine and the rain to fall, we are perpetually reminded that the lovingkindness of God covers alike the evil and the good, the just and the unjust. So then this happy contrast between sparrow and disciple, between sheep and man, comes to us with an increased significance, because it is not the contrast of a mind that had no care for nature, but of one that had discovered how infinitely beyond the worth of nature is the value of the human soul. In the mind of Christ the life of man is so precious that he can declare that nothing else can be valued against it. In one profound passage he does set the soul of man in contrast with the totality of nature, only to dismiss it with a memorable question: "What doth it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?" In the vast world of nature Jesus could think of nothing of sufficient value with which to make the exchange.

Then there is the attitude of Jesus toward

children. Here we gain a fresh and fruitful suggestion of his doctrine of man. How large a place children filled in the mind of Christ we can see the moment we bring the passages and incidents together. There are the recorded healings of children—the daughter of Jairus, the nobleman's little son, the epileptic boy, the heathen woman's child. His public life was perpetually in touch with childhood. Early in his ministry Galilean mothers brought their children to him that he might bless them, and at the tragic end little children sang their triumphal song to him in the temple at Jerusalem. One likes to think of them as the very children whom he had previously blessed. Then there are his own references to childhood. We have his parable of children playing in the market-place. And among the great and solemn words addressed to the repentant Peter, these have never been forgotten: "Feed my lambs." All the work done in the world for children has its ample justification in those three words alone. Every teacher in our Bible Schools feels that he has in them his Divine commission to teach, and fathers and moth-

ers know that they are continuing the work of Jesus when they gather their children around the family altar for instruction and worship. One of the profoundest paradoxes of Jesus is that to become truly great one must attain to the humility of children. To receive a child in Christ's name is to receive him. To soil the soul of a child is to call down upon one a terrible woe.

Then he gave to childhood its eternal "charter" when he said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God." We shall never get beyond the great vision of childhood which these words reveal. Here is the child hidden in the heart of an Enfolding Presence; the Kingdom of God belongs to him; it is his inheritance; it is his by virtue of his spiritual descent. Here are the souls of all children, your children and mine, really at home in the Father's house because they came from God and belong to God. It is in the light of this vision that Wordsworth must be read.

"The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:

Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home."

If you see in these great lines only a Platonic philosophy bathed in the rich glow of poetry, you will miss their meaning altogether. But to read them in the light of the mind of Christ is forevermore to see the souls of children as he saw them, in secret and natural fellowship with God. The soul of the child as the home of wonder and trust, of reverence and receptivity, of light and love and God—that is the final vision we receive through the mind of Christ. And this vision is of immense moment to us for the understanding of his estimate of humanity. Here, in the Image of God in the soul of the child, is the vision of the eternal worth of man. In its light the legend of Prometheus cannot live. Man is no mere Promethean adventurer snatching from the skies the fire of his spiritual greatness. He holds his mastery over nature by Divine Right as a son of God. He is not a receiver of stolen goods, but the inheritor of Divine gifts.

But, you may remind me that, as childhood is left behind, the Image of God in the soul may become almost unrecognizable. Rude, sacrilegious hands may soil and mar the Divine inheritance. Personal sin may destroy the early fellowship, and the child's consciousness of God be lost in the man's wilful estrangement from God. Well, let us admit the truth of all this, and what then? Look at the attitude of Jesus toward the moral failures of his own generation. Here his consciousness of the worth of man is seen in its amazing strength; for just here it meets its fiercest contradiction. But he was neither unaware of, nor afraid of, the contradiction. He could sum up his own mission to the race in no mightier words than these: "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost." And in all that he says—and he says a great deal—about the spiritual blindness, the hardened heart, the perverted conscience and the enslaved will of man, he is but testifying to his belief in the essential greatness of human nature, to his impassioned confidence that the soul of man could yet break the bonds that bound him and leap into the freedom

of the sons of God. The irrecoverableness of the lost soul is no doctrine of Jesus. He would have heard it preached with horror and indignation. Degraded a man may be, sinking under an appalling suspicion of his own worthlessness for God,

> "Yet, with hands of evil stained,
> And an ear by discord pained,
> He is groping for the keys
> Of the heavenly harmonies."

Lost a man may be, yet not so lost that God cannot find him, nor yet so lost that he cannot find himself and, in one grand moment of spiritual illumination, cry, "I will arise and go to my Father." This was how man appeared in the mind of Christ. The parable of the Prodigal Son is the monumental witness to the faith in man, no less than to the faith in God, by the strength of which Jesus moved with serene confidence and unclouded vision among his contemporaries. "With everything against him," as Dr. John Watson once said, "Jesus treated men as sons of God, and his optimism has had its vindication."

What we are apt to forget is that the

vision of an Eternal Fatherhood in God, of which I have already written, was not only the creative centre of the character and career of Jesus, but also the very heart of his teaching about man. He beheld men as the real sons of the Divine Father, as still bearing about them the indelible marks of their spiritual origin. And the aim of his teaching was to convince men of this, to help them to see themselves as he saw them. Once this divine vision was kindled in the soul, the battle of life was half-won; for to set man in the light of his value for God, to persuade him that he is really dear to God because he is a child of God, is immediately to give him an enormous advantage in his struggle upward.

Here is the secret of the overwhelming impression of a loving power at the heart of the universe, and available for man, which one gains from a study of the sayings of Jesus. He spoke repeatedly of a Kingdom of God. Close attention to his words reveals this Kingdom as no mere empire of a Sovereign, but a vast home, a Father's Kingdom, an Empire of Love. A king cares only for the welfare of his kingdom,

but a father cares for the individual child, cares for it, as Augustine declared, "as if he had none else to care for." This conviction of the watchful and redeeming love of God as covering not only the race of men, but also each individual member of the race, could not be more finally nor more exquisitely expressed than in Christ's own parable of the Lost Sheep. The mind of man has ever found in that parable the perfect declaration of the value of the human soul for God; and the heart of man has always drawn from it the assurance of an Unseen Presence within and without him, the assurance that underneath and round about man are the everlasting arms—the arms of an Almighty Father for whom every child is of infinite worth.

III

Here then is the teaching of Jesus. But greater than the teaching is the Teacher. "Christ stands behind everything he says." And it is in the light of the perfect manhood of Christ Jesus that we read his suggestions of the worth of man. The great creative forces which have contributed to

the moral progress of mankind are ideals and personalities. When the ideal and the personality are one we may be said to have the greatest possible creative force. Now it is part of the faith of the Christian thinker that the supreme ideal for man and the supreme ideal of God meet and find their ideal interpretation in the mind of Christ. The absoluteness of that mind for the thought and faith and hope and endeavor of the first disciples of Jesus has more than maintained itself in the thought and faith and hope and endeavor of his disciples in succeeding generations. For the supreme questions of the mind, for the surest guidance of the conscience, for the final consolation of the heart, the modern man still cries: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of Eternal Life."

Here is the open secret of the enormous influence of the mind of Christ in moulding the thought and life of man which deepens and increases with the centuries. "Jesus imparted new values to things," admits Prof. George B. Foster, one of the most radical critics of the Gospel story. "He scattered new thoughts broadcast over the

world. But it was only his Person that gave these new values and these new thoughts that victorious power which transformed the world." Yes! and not the least marvellous revelation of that Person is the glory of his humanity.

It is not simply that we can find no defect in the character of Jesus, but that we find there the one complete realization of ideal manhood ever shown to the world. And this ideal manhood is part of human history. It is an integral factor in all our thought of the universe. When we are seeking to discover the essential nature of man, and the ultimate character of the universe, we can not neglect the supreme historical manifestation of both which is granted to us in the mind of Christ. A philosophy and a psychology which disregard history are doomed as fatally inadequate. And a theology which renders homage to Christ as the Son of God, but refuses to him the throne of a real humanity, has already ceased to be Christian. Any doctrine of the Divinity of Christ that is reached through neglect of his humanity can have no conceivable relation to the struggling, needy race of men.

It is surely not necessary to prove here the eternal transcendence of Jesus. I am profoundly sorry, indeed, for the man who does not *feel* that there is something in Jesus utterly and for ever above and beyond him, something that is not reproducible in his own person. Nor should it be necessary to prove the ultimateness of the moral thought and example of Jesus; though the modern German phrase of our times — *Interim-sethik* — would seem to imply some such necessity. But no proofs are inviolate against the vagaries of the wanton intellect. Surely, whether we are thinking of our own conduct alone, or of the conduct of our social, civic and national life, we men of the twentieth century must still share the profound awe of the men of the first when they contemplated the moral consciousness of their Master. The lofty moral ideals of Jesus, far from being merely *ad interim* ideals, are still basic for modern life and conduct. So the Christian thinker of today dares to amend the great sentence of Plato, quoted earlier in this chapter, and declares "All Christians are agreed that the mind of Christ is king of heaven and earth."

IV

But this is not the whole truth. Something remains which needs special emphasis in our times. It is that there is that in Christ which *is* imitable, and that the imitation of Christ is not only the task of humanity, but also its glorious privilege. For, again in St. Paul's glowing language, "We have the mind of Christ." It is not only the ideal which we see in the mind of Christ, but also the equipment for the reproduction of that ideal in man. The Christian position is that the revelation of manhood in Christ Jesus is the revelation of a manhood which we may all share. He was made like unto his brethren that they might be made like unto him. The manhood of Jesus belongs to us. It is our potential manhood that we recognize in him. It is because the mind of Christ is our very life that we not only see our manhood transfigured and enthroned there, but dare also to enter under the inspiration of that mind on the great and toilsome way to the City of Saints.

For both vision and achievement then, for

both ideal and power, man is dependent upon Christ. Through the mind of Christ the character of God is conceived, through the same mind the possibilities of man and his infinite worth for God are discovered; and in the living strength of that supreme mind man's possibilities become attainments. Here is the faith in which we stand. Here is the truth which makes the teachings of Jesus about man not a mockery and a despair, but an inspiration and a life. Man is not alone with his towering, goading ideals. He stands in an eternal fellowship of spirit and life with Christ in God. We are bidden to believe that we are sons of God, that we are joint heirs with Christ in all things, that all he has is ours—his courage and strength, his truth and goodness, all the excellence of his manhood, all the power of his Godhood is ours: not a thing will he withhold from those who put their trust in him. This is the Christ who belongs to us, and to whom we belong. He hath given himself for us and unto us, and we have the mind of Christ. Alone, man could but look up with longing eyes and breaking heart at the stars in his moral firmament;

but in the might of his Lord he can reach up to them, pluck them out of the highest heaven and adorn his life with them. We are living below our true manhood. Yet are we saved by hope. The mind of Christ is king of heaven and earth, and in the strength of that mind our Divine sonship shall yet be perfected.

VI

PERSONALITY AND THE TRUTH

"What is Truth?" *St. John 18: 38.*

"I am the . . . Truth." *St. John 14: 6.*

"The great religious movements which have stirred humanity to its depths and altered the beliefs of nations spring ultimately from the conscious and deliberate efforts of extraordinary minds, not from the blind, unconscious cooperation of the multitude. The attempt to explain history without the influence of great men may flatter the vanity of the vulgar, but it will find no favor with the philosophic historian." J. G. Frazer, *"Adonis, Attis, Osiris"* (2nd ed.), p. 260, n. 3.

"There is, indeed, no factor of change or cause of progress known to history or human experience equal in efficiency to the great personality—the man who embodies some creative and causal idea. It is not nearly so true that great movements or moments produce great men as that the men create the moments. . . . It is personality that counts in all things, and most of all in that concentrated form of moral good which we call religion." A. M. Fairbairn, *"The Philosophy of the Christian Religion,"* p. 92.

"The Christian religion has itself been a primary factor in the development of the conception and reality of personality; the truths it declares concerning the unseen world point to a fuller realization of that personality. The Christian doctrine of the relation of personality to the eternal order of reality, the spiritual world, is both illustrated and constituted through the Founder of Christianity." H. Wheeler Robinson, *"The Christian Doctrine of Man,"* p. 278.

"We beseech the Father of Lights, if He is the God of infinite Charity we proclaim Him to be, to tell us whether all our thoughts of Freedom and Truth have proceeded from the Father of Lies; whether for eighteen centuries we have been propagating a mockery when we have said that there is a Son of God, who is the Truth, and who can make us free indeed." F. D. Maurice, *"Theological Essays,"* p. 90.

CHAPTER VI

PERSONALITY AND THE TRUTH

THROUGHOUT the course of this little book we have busied ourselves with the application of the mind of Christ to serious problems of thought and equally serious problems of practical life. In this chapter I wish to go back to the beginning and try to put the central principle in the clear light of psychology and history that it may become more fruitful in all our after-thinking.

With Pilate, who asked the vital question concerning truth, we shall have little to do except as that question of his may be considered as representative of the modern attitude toward the problems of life and thought. Whatever may have been the immediate emotion that prompted the question, one cannot help thinking that Pilate had known something, perhaps in an earlier day, of that agony which is known to all searchers after truth. If now he no longer

sought for truth, if now he no longer even cared to know it, his very cynicism may have been the last result of early disillusions. Perhaps nothing quite so appalling ever overwhelms the mind as the sense of the futility of all effort, the dreary suspicion that there is no absolute truth anywhere. Such a feeling may leave a man the prey of those baser spirits which seem to lurk in the abysses of personality. And if, as the poet Lowell once said, "every man is the prisoner of his date," then some pity may be extended to Pilate when we remember that his date lay within the general breakdown of both philosophy and religion in the practical activities of life. It is the simple truth of that age which Matthew Arnold expresses in these sad lines:

> "On that hard, Pagan world, disgust
> And secret loathing fell;
> Deep weariness and sated lust
> Made human life a hell."

And we may regard it as probable that Pilate shared to the full this disgust, loathing and weariness. Nothing any more had worth for him. He had struck all the chords of life he knew, and the result was a jarring

dissonance. It is little wonder then if today we find an accent of cynicism and bitterness, of impatience and scorn, in his abrupt question to Jesus, "What is truth?"

I

Let us look at this question, however, as expressing the temper of the times in which we live. I am aware of the peril which attends every attempt to characterize one's own age. We may be too close to it to judge aright. We may be too much at the mercy of the mighty current to know whither it is taking us. We may be too bewildered by the cross-lights to see the central guiding pillar of flame. Yet it does seem certain to many of us that what has been called the passion for reality is the dominant temper of our new day. As I have already said the progress of physical science and the rapid popularization of its results, the rise of new sciences and philosophies and the critical methods of the last century have resulted largely in creating a bewildering sense of the complexity of human life and of the material world. We are both the inheritors and the discoverers

of vast realms of knowledge; and this inheritance and this discovery have come upon us ringing with challenge. Our deepest spiritual convictions are questioned at every turn. In this new world of ours what place has man? What place has God? What are the ends toward which life moves? Some things which our fathers easily and strongly believed have become unbelievable to us. And we ask, sometimes fearfully, sometimes jauntily, Does this mean that we have only to dive deep enough to find that there is no moral or religious truth at the bottom of the well at all? We know that some thoughtful men have answered this question in the affirmative, and have acquiesced, sadly enough, in the desolating conception of an orphaned world. And many others seem to have lost all certitude, all confidence; their inner life has become a wild ferment, and they have fallen into the pathetic agnosticism which asks, "What is truth?" without daring to hope for an answer. Of this temper, Amiel is the most striking representative, and his *Journal Intime* the classic expression.

But there is another temper which has

been generated by this immense new knowledge, the gift and the achievement of our times. It is the temper of the fighter, of the man with an undying passion for reality in his soul. It is this temper which I believe really dominates modern thought, research and criticism. It asks "What is truth?" and confidently looks for an answer. It refuses to be dismayed because the answer is not forthcoming at once, or along the path on which it first journeys. It believes that a profound and adequate explanation of human ends can be found. It is the temper which, at the same time, has inspired the splendid investigations of natural science, and yet refused to be bound by the limitations of that science. It remains sensitive to spiritual things, and is so certain of the existence of truth that it sees traditional beliefs overthrown, the rubbish of the years cast out, and its own most cherished illusions destroyed, with a courage which, if not always serene, is at the least full of hope. Its one craving is for truth, for that ultimate reality in which it believes both man and his world will find their satisfying interpretation.

II

What is truth? One of the greatest answers of modern thought to this question comes from psychology. In its conception of personality and its emphasis on personal relations, the new psychology has opened for us a path and bids us walk therein if we would find truth. Now this is neither the time nor the place to enter upon an exhaustive analysis of the modern idea of personality. But one or two things may briefly be said, the first of which is that the old "faculty psychology" and the theology built upon it are gone for ever. According to that theory personality was split up into separate departments. It was a succession of different states brought about by the combination, or a refusal to combine, of really disconnected faculties. Thinking, willing, feeling were so many distinct and separate activities through which a man could, so to say, serve three masters with a cheerful sense of irresponsibility. The master of one's thought need not be the master of one's deed, nor the ruler of one's

head the ruler of the heart. Of course such a psychological Babel was doomed to destruction. A house divided against itself cannot stand; and a personality of divided faculties cannot stand either. The only proper place for it is the padded cell. Men sought earnestly for some principle which should bind these successive agencies into one. Socrates had sought to find it in reason, Epicurus in feeling, and Zeno in the will. But modern psychology finds it in the whole man. It tells me that thinking, willing and feeling are not separate faculties, but partial aspects of the same Self. There is not one man in me who thinks, another who feels, and still another who acts. It is I who think and feel and act. The whole man is engaged in these several yet blended states of personality. And it is just here, in this unity of the conscious Self, that psychology finds the path to ultimate reality. "Personality," says R. C. Moberly, "involving, as necessary qualities of its being, reason, will, love, is incomparably the highest phenomenon known to experience." The admission, which you may sometimes hear pressed, that human personality is not

yet perfect, that it is still in the making, is true, but it does not invalidate the above statement. It still remains true that personality, as you and I know it, is the ultimate fact of experience: the one fact to which every other fact comes up for judgment. It may be, as James and Höffding and others say, that in the last analysis personality—the real Self—remains an "eternal riddle." But there is no sane man who is not certain of his personality, even his individuality, however little he may have thought about it. He knows that he is himself, and not another. He knows that he is a person, and not a thing. And it is as he comes more and more to realize the conscious unity of his own personal life in thought and feeling and action that he reaches another emphasis of modern psychology—the sense of the value of personal influence and personal relations. He recognizes himself as a person living in a world of persons with whom he must seek relations if his own personality is ever to attain its ultimate worth to himself and to the world.

Well, it is just here that history joins hands with psychology. Indeed, there is

nothing more striking than the unanimity with which the various departments of modern thought emphasize the value of personal influence and relations. In the thought of less than a hundred years ago man was lost amid a whirl of impersonal forces. Historic movements, whether in politics, ethics or religion, seemed adequately described as the outcome of simple, unconscious world-processes. Men were the creatures of their times, not the times the creation of men. Personality had dropped to its nadir. Man was a mere shuttlecock, tossed through the ages by invisible and ineluctable battledores. But now, though the view still feebly lives in certain economic interpretations of history, the modern critical spirit, working alike in history and psychology, has made it untenable. As Prof. Villa puts it in his "Contemporary Psychology,"—"Instead of considering social institutions, ideas, and phenomena as spontaneous products of a nameless multitude, modern psychology rightly considers them the outcome of individual genius, subsequently consolidated, diffused, and preserved for the whole species by imitation." In other words, the real

forces of the world have been real persons. "Say what you will," exclaimed Goethe once, "everything turns in the long run upon the person." And the truth of that saying is abundantly verified by history. Some great personality has always stood on the threshold of every exodus which humanity has made from ignorance to knowledge, from darkness to light, from the prison-house to the open moor. Some man first saw upon the distant hill the fresh light, and announced his vision to his comrades in the valley. Some man first heard within himself the awful voice of a new truth, and proclaimed it in the forum and the market-place. Some man first discovered a new country, and called his fellows to join him over-seas. And the progress of humanity has gone forward just in proportion as other men walked in the light, followed the truth and entered the new country discovered by its commanding personalities. Not all men are men of genius, not all can discover truth for themselves, not all can launch out into unknown seas to find new realms awaiting them on the farther shore. But you and I and every man can

follow in the footprints left by the giants of yesterday. And perhaps the real word for the vast majority of us must be the word of Jesus: "Others have labored, and ye have entered into their labors." But the lesson of history is before us. We must enter into their labors and endeavor to complete them before our own personality can ever become an inspiration and a strength to succeeding generations.

III

Here then is what has been established by both psychology and history; namely, that the great forces of the world have been personal, and that the progress of humanity has resulted through its attempts to reach the stature of its loftiest sons. But now another fact faces us. "No great personality answers to the ideal of greatness in all the aspects of greatness. Great men have their limitations. Some have been great in action, some in thought, some in invention, some in power of poetic or prophetic vision, and some in other ways." The writer of these words asks, what you and I have asked in some moment of our lives: "Is there a

Personality who can be to all men what some personalities have been to some men?"

Now, we have scarcely asked that question when the Person of Christ stands boldly before us, claiming to be the adequate answer. Not only so, but the testimony of the centuries to the truth of that claim assails our ears like the sound of many waters. Just here we are arrested by one of the most striking things in history. Among all the philosophies and religions of the world whose business it was to find truth and to establish it, only one man has ever stood forward and said, "I am the truth." Passionate prophets have spoken to men in the name of God; and we now know that the finer religious history of pre-Christian days was their achievement. From the days of Moses in Egypt to those of Cromwell in England, of Mazzini in Italy and of Lincoln in America, men have stood at the heart of uncertain nations, and have felt themselves called to the mightiest tasks of their day. From the days of Samuel in Shiloh to our own great days in America, men have stood forth boldly as the bearers of Divine

messages to individuals and peoples. But none of them all, liberators or prophets, ever spake with accent of Jesus. Never does he join with the prophets and say, "The word of Jahveh came unto me;" but rather, "I say unto you." He never seems to have known those tempests of doubt which shook a Cromwell; nor to have passed with Mazzini into that "moral desert" where ideas and ideals seem but false and empty dreams. With no trace of the fatal misgiving which at times have overtaken the world's greatest, Jesus stood before the multitudes and cried: "I am the truth. I am the way. I am the light. I am the life. I am the bread which came down out of heaven." This sense of perfect Personality, of a completed Self, which these sayings disclose, is simply amazing. It would appear to place Jesus at once and for all time utterly above and beyond every man who has ever spoken to men in the Divine Name.

If you remind me that all these sayings are from the Fourth Gospel, that they may not be the actual testimony of Jesus to himself, but rather the expressions of a fond disciple who had idealized his Master, then

I will call you to some other words of his, words which are admitted as genuine by the severest critics of our time. You will find them in the eleventh chapter of St. Matthew. "All things have been delivered unto me by my Father, and no man knoweth the Son save the Father; neither doth any know the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him. Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." If there is anything in the Fourth Gospel more assertive of the consciousness of Jesus that all men need him, and that he is competent to meet the needs of all, then I have never read it and do not know where to look for it. And this great saying is not away from our subject. It is very close to it. For there is no heart-weariness so poignant, there is no load so heavy as that which a man knows who is searching for truth and finds only delusion. To that man Jesus says, "Come unto me, for all things have been delivered unto me by my Father;"—that is to say, all the things a man really longs to know when he asks sincerely, "What is truth?"

IV

For what, after all, is a man seeking by that question? He is certainly not seeking for a system of logical ideas. He can find that among the philosophers. And just as certainly he is not seeking for intellectual statements of religion. He can find those in the various creeds of Christendom. He is really asking: What is God? What is man? What is my relation to God and to my fellowman? What is the moral significance of life?

In answer to these questions Jesus directs the attention of men to himself. He invented no philosophical doctrine of God, he called him "Father." He offered no scientific definition of man, he called him "Son." He said that the relation of men to one another was to be that of brothers. He said that life was man's opportunity for heroism and self-denial, for love and great service. As an individual, man should aim for self-mastery in the inner life: let the eye be single, the heart pure, the thought straight. As a social being, man's relations were summed up in love as the absolute sovereign

lord of all personal relations. As a religious being, his relation to God was to be one of trust and hope, of fear and a great yearning. He told men that if they had faith in God they could remove mountains, that if they feared God they would fear no one and nothing else. And when they wished to know how these could be, he said, "Come unto me. Learn of me. He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. I do always the things that are pleasing to him. Love one another just as I love you. Trust God. Trust me. I am the way. Let not your heart be troubled; I am the life. Let not your mind be confused; I am the truth." And who does not see now that in defining God and man and life in the great terms of personal relations, Jesus was revealing the final truth about them?

This constant pointing to himself, this bold interpretation of himself, now as light, now as truth, now as the way to the Father, was the whole message of Jesus to man. As men recognized him in these symbolic terms, and welcomed their recognition of him, they would discover his sufficiency for all their needs. Truth—the truth by which

one lives—is not a matter of the intellect alone, but of the whole man in personal fellowship with Christ. And that is the message of Jesus to the men of today. The centre of his moral thought is, as Prof. Foster acknowledges, "the unity, the wholeness, the internality, and freedom of a personality whose content is moral love." And when we really catch sight of the perfect moral personality which stands behind and shines through all his teaching, we begin to see how, indeed, he could claim to be the truth. For the moral thought of Jesus was realized in himself. There were no unrealized ideals in the character and life of Jesus. Not only so, but he planted his ideals as a creative force in the minds of his followers. So then it was not the ideals of Jesus alone, not even his moral thought, but these as they were incarnated in his Person and made available for others, that was the truth. "The life was the light of men." In the realm of moral insight Jesus himself was the truth; and to be truth in that realm is surely to be ultimate truth; and this truth becomes ours as the mind of Christ takes possession of our minds. Or to put this in

another way, the Christian faith is that in the mind of Christ the mind of God was completely manifested, and through him the mind of God is being progressively manifested in humanity.

V

And now let me remind you, with Sabatier, that he who does not collaborate with Jesus while listening to him will come empty away. "He only leads the seeker to the truth. He only pardons those who repent; or fills the hungerers and thirsters after righteousness." In other words, truth comes through action. Everywhere Jesus emphasized the central importance of action; and it remains one of the merits of the new psychology that it is in line with Jesus here also. The contemplation of the mind of Christ is not sufficient for life. Contemplation must be followed by the effort to assimilate and reproduce the moral content it finds there. The nun in her narrow cell, and the hermit in his desert cave, wear out their lives in a mystic contemplation of the Divine Image; but they have not so much as gained the first glimpse of truth of the real mind

of Christ. It is those who are in the thick of life's work, fighting their own battles and the battles of others in faith and confidence and love, who are on the path that leads to truth. How shall I know the truth? By doing it. That sounds an irreconcilable paradox. It is really the one absolutely correct method. For truth is not a formula to be learned; it is an experience—first in the mind of Christ, then in the minds of his followers. It is something to be lived, and is the possession of all who will dare to live it. As the moral and religious content of the mind of Christ becomes ours through our obedience to its promptings, we find truth. It is the new heart, the new will, the new conscience raised to its highest power and keenest activity through which truth is revealed.

I may believe that there is a God because the Bible and good men tell me so; but I know no single truth about God until I awake to his presence in my soul and begin to live as a son of God. Intellectually, I may believe in the solidarity of the human race; but I shall learn no truth about that solidarity until I begin to act toward men

as Jesus acted. I may hold a splendid philosophy concerning the moral purpose of life; but its awful, holy meaning will be for ever hidden from me until I set moral ends before me and persistently live in the light of eternity.

This is what Jesus meant when he told Pilate that "every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." Pilate did not hear the voice of truth, he did not see the truth in the Christ who stood before him because he had not been true to himself, he had not accustomed himself to doing the truth which even his own philosophers had taught him. To set the personalities of Pilate and Jesus side by side is to know—whatever vain things overtake us afterwards—the eternal distinction between truth and falsehood. It is also to know that truth can only become living and real to us as we transfer our search from the realm of abstractions to the realm of moral persons and follow him who made no distinction between himself and truth. The norm of truth is the living mind of Christ in the living minds of men. And from the moment we really welcome the presence and influence of the mind of Christ,

and sincerely strive to set our lives in accord with the life that was the expression of that mind, we begin an experience in truth which will continue and expand until, at last, we see him face to face, and know ourselves as he knows us.

THE END.

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